UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

REPRESENTABILITY: A CONTRIBUTION TO A CRITIQUE OF FEMINIST LIBRARIANSHIP

BY

© BRETT CEMER

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled REPRESENTABILITY: A CONTRIBUTION TO A CRITIQUE OF FEMINIST LIBRARIANSHIP in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES.

Catriona de Scossa

Hope S. Olson

Hope Olson

Debra Shogan

7 June 1994

To Leona

For TKB, *m.o.a.*

ABSTRACT

Keywords: feminist librarianship; academic librarianship; academic feminism; feminist literary studies; classification theory; Marxism; Ranganathan, S. R.; Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty.

The author discusses academic librarianship from a certain feminist and Marxist perspective. Relying upon dialectical social theory for his method and feminist literary studies for his theoretical resources, the author attempts to comprehend the objective and subjective obstructions to emancipatory practice through an immanent critique of feminist library practice. The particular focus is on library classification theory and practice as a *sine qua non* of librarianship. The author discusses classification as cultural representation and argues that it is a social practice which contributes to setting the conditions of representability in the academy and elsewhere, thereby mediating knowledge production. The author also addresses collection development and other elements of the project of feminist librarianship.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AST	Analytico-synthetic classification theory.
DTM	"Dancing Through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice, and Politics of a Feminist Literary Criticism." Annette Kolodny.
IMF	*Intellectual Freedom Manual*. 4th ed.
IOW	*In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.
IR	Information retrieval.
PCC	*The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Dialogues, Strategies*. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Edited by Sarah Harasym.
PLC	*Prolegomena to Library Classification*. 3d ed. S. R. Ranganathan.
PV	"Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality, and Value." Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.
WT	*A Women's Thesaurus*. Edited by Mary Ellen Capek.

Beware, my friend, of the signifier that would take you back to the authority of a signified! Beware of diagnosis that would reduce your generative powers. "Common" nouns are also proper nouns that disparage your singularity by classifying it into species. Break out of the circles; don't remain within the psychoanalytic closure. Take a look around, then cut through!

--Hélène Cixous, "Laugh of the Medusa"

The democracy of the Five Laws of Library Science is of a severe kind. A specialist reader . . . should be served as efficiently as the majority.

--S. R. Ranganathan

We cannot understand history, society or culture unless we graph the causes and effects of sex/gender systems. . . . The feminist critic must break such sex/gender systems, using language as a weapon and tool, and then labor to renew history, society, and culture.

--Catharine Stimpson, "Feminism and Feminist Criticism"

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps it is fitting that this unconditional condemnation of the North American Library System, anchored by the Library of Congress, should be completed during the ninetieth anniversary of that Library's card distribution service, which ultimately served as the foundation for the System's creation. Because the sorry state of classification theory in North America both enables and sanctions this System, I believe that any attack upon it and its effects must address the problem of North American classification theory in a manner which can both comprehend that System and go beyond it. Feminist librarianship provides a way to do this.

So this essay is a contribution to classification theory, but it is not about classification theory. It is about feminist librarianship as a tendency to transformation in librarianship, as Marxism could not be since Krupskaia, although, as I argue, any viable feminism cannot ignore the dispossessed, the "victims of development," and others for whom Marxism provides the philosophy of emancipatory praxis.[1] I attempt to reveal this tendency by an example of the immanent critique of library practice, an example which I eventually came to call representability, which is in turn but a small contribution to a feminist theory of the bibliographic apparatus.[2] Realising the tendency requires a shared research programme in feminist librarianship.

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[1] Jeremy Seabrook, *Victims of Development: Resistance and Alternatives* (London: Verso, 1993).

[2] A preliminary notice concerning the terminology employed in this sentence: *immanent critique* is a method which grows from the discipline in which it inheres, a method which I hope to demonstrate in action and which I explain in more detail in the methodological comments found in chapter 1, sub verbo "Notes on Words and Methods"; *representability* is a term borrowed from Gayatri Spivak ("Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value," in *Literary Theory Today*, ed. Peter Collier and Helen Geyer-Ryan (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1990), 222), which I here introduce into librarianship and whose evolving definition is the substance of this thesis. Crucially, it *is* a mutually determined and determining exchange between subject and object and thus has no meaning or true existence except as that relation; that is, the 'representability' of a thing (its "condition of representability") has meaning only in relation with the (in)ability of a particular system or field of signification (the 'conditions' or 'limits' of that representability) to

Throughout this essay there is a pervasive anxiety, evident in the strain of impossible yet officially required positivity, endless evasions, loose ends, and a desperate attempt to talk about a theoretical concretion of the sociality and the place of librarianship in it, without once being able to precisely declare my commitments, their relationships, or their genealogies. Perhaps this is the mark of librarianship's poverty in this age of the totalisation of distantly-administered technological brutality, in an age when "freedom has contracted to pure negativity."[3] I have told myself that this anxiety is the price of attempting to elevate critical human thought and activity to a position of methodological primacy in a field where criticism has gone the way of the card catalogue's sensuousness, that is, into a scorned obsolescence. I have said it is the price of criticising feminist librarianship, what I know to be the last, best hope of librarianship's liberating commitment, now strangling between the audacious summons of the codex and the fateful triumph of 'skimming', 'executive summaries', and the rapid 'scrolling' of compelled academic hyper-production. For one of this first generation of cradle-to-grave 'word-processors', for whom abandoned words leave no immediately discernable trace, it is certainly these things. But above all it is the disease of a time and a place where honesty and dishonesty, gesture and thrust, cause and effect, luck and conscience, reform and regression, all have lost their contrasts and thus almost ceased to have meaning. While nothing is assumed, the assumptions are yet violently present. One can do nothing but refuse to answer what is put to one, while nevertheless listening, and answering with neither equivocation nor self-effacing solicitude, which is not in short supply in a world of 'self-marketing'.

* * *

The thesis presents at least five main 'arguments'. A reading which focuses on one of them will highlight different moments of the thesis from the others. But a

---

represent it; finally, *bibliographic apparatus*, a term which I use throughout to mean the socio-economic apparatus for the production and distribution of 'books' broadly defined. This definition includes the mode and relations of that production, as well as the ideological sanctions/effects and legitimation.

[3] Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia* [1951], trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1974), §17.

reading which focuses exclusively on one argument will be incomplete. The interrelation of the arguments represents a sixth and key line of argument.

I do not develop each argument with equal fullness. In fact, in opposition to the usual 'thesis style', I attempt: to raise more questions than I answer; to provide resources or 'loose ends' for further development and even for undermining the arguments; to avoid feigning closure, certainty, or universality where none is possible or desirable; and to leave a sense of maturation and evolution as the thesis progresses. This tendency is especially noticable in, but not confined to, my footnotes, which perhaps carry rather more weight in this thesis than in most theses. To characterise this experimental style, its theoretical significance, and the kind of reading it demands, I borrow from redaction criticism the suggestive term "textual debris." Textual debris are the 'internal' traces of the history and construction of an extant document. They undermine its claim to unity, coherence, independence, and divine revelation. But perhaps more importantly, they allow the *reconstruction* of a document as a number of different and divergent documents, as a praxis, as a social product, as a realised historical possibility among other unrealised ones, as a series of strategic exclusions, and as a crucible of the human struggle for meaning and identity in history and society. I have left many textual debris in the thesis so that this document may be thus undermined and reconstructed by its readers. My hope is that this style and commitment will be both more fruitful and more honest.

Throughout the arguments, my variable commitments to feminism, socialism, Marxism, and analytico-synthetic classification theory (AST) negotiate with one another. My unusual path and viewpoint may be of interest to adherents to each of these identities or positions.

The five main lines of argument and their key assumptions are the following:
A. Concerning feminist librarianship: In my contribution to feminist librarianship, I attempt to locate: its sources, the identities and practices of feminist librarians; its social and historical location in librarianship; its weaknesses, needs (*Nöte*), the objective and subjective obstructions to its development, and its objective contradictions; its potential developments and crucial role in librarianship, the

academy, and society. As stated above, I treat it as a negation of previous librarianship, a tendency toward transformation. This argument is especially prominent in chapters one and five, but is also present in the argument of chapter four.

B. Concerning feminist theory and practice in/and librarianship: Feminists of various persuasions provide the necessary epistemic break with business as usual in librarianship by providing critical analyses of key elements of librarianship's enabling assumptions, institutions, theories, and practices. These include theories of knowledge, disciplines, the academy, value, reading, and so on. The studies and experiences of feminists, including those of feminist librarians, who are themselves a part of the ongoing project of feminism, constitute the source and continuing nourishment for feminist librarianship. This situation makes it necessary for librarians to forsake the narrow bounds of their own professional literature and the technical problems of automated practice and to explore (or "read") the ways in which feminisms undermine, alter, and re-enable library practice. Chapters two and three bring together a wide range of relevant feminist material and propose how this material needs to be fruitfully read and acted by librarians. Much of these chapters is also occupied with the often neglected task of explicating what I take feminism, specifically 'third-wave' feminism, to mean, and on what grounds.

C. Concerning academic librarianship: Feminism brings academic librarianship face to face with the political, epistemic, economic, and theoretical commitments of its current practices. Feminist librarians herald the possible emergence of a new academic librarianship which may make possible new practices and analyses by revealing and transcending the obstructions to change in the status quo. Chapters two and five follow and explore this current.

D. Concerning library classification: The most apparent argument of the thesis develops the implications of feminism and feminist librarianship for library classification by showing that a feminist theory of classification will, within a negative dialectic, draw upon a judgemental criterion which transcends the current predication of value in the bibliographic apparatus, namely, the *conditions of representability* enabled and put into effect by library classification. Third-wave feminism requires, among other things, that these conditions maximise the possibilities for difference of all kinds, change (however radical), and human freedom, while recognising irreducible limits, exclusions, and violence. A provisional, dialectical commitment (through an immanent critique) to systematic representation in the form of AST provides a means by which North American librarianship may move in this direction. I argue, in fact, that it is toward this that feminist work tends. However, *this innovation in classification theory is excluded from possibility under the current conditions*. As I attempt to make clear in chapter four, feminist librarians have so far been unable to comprehend this obstruction and penetrate its mystification for reasons I discuss in that chapter. I attempt to reveal the obstruction and its mystification while providing resources for transcending them. Classification here assumes central importance because I take it to be the representational mediation of human sociality upon which librarianship is based, the *sine qua non*, pre-condition, and essence of its practice and theory.

F. Concerning librarianship as social practice: Reiterating librarianship's status as a social practice is tautological. However, how this status is to be understood is contested. In this thesis, I argue by example that a dialectical social theory provides the best path to comprehending librarianship's social relations in the totality characterised by patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and neo-colonialism. This assertion pervades the entire main body of the presentation, which in this sense is structured by a series of immanent critiques within an overall immanent critique of feminist librarianship. The latter begins in chapter two with an analysis of North American librarianship's basic exchange relation or commodity, the "virtual body." Feminist librarianship is finally brought to crisis in chapter four through the contradictions which inhabit its practices, which I analyze through a demystification of the obstructive political economy and technologies of the North American bibliographic apparatus and the formulation of a feminist counter-position. In chapter five, along with the concluding pages of chapter four, I suggest some ways in which this and other contradictions might be transcended. In the Epilogue, the overall critique culminates in a view of librarianship within the concrete social whole.

The critique assumes the primacy of human praxis in history and society and the need of immanent comprehension for the transcendence of practices, but also the "self-mediated being [*Durchsichselbstsein*]" of humanity, society, and nature, and thus the irreducible presence of theory as a mediation of all practices. Unreflexive vanguardist practice ignores this fact. In this case, immanent critique attempts to reveal the theories which, in dialectical fashion, inhabit and are normed by current practices in librarianship (e.g., capitalist political economy), bring them to crisis in their theoretical contradictions, and point the way to a possible practical negation of the negation. "The resolution of the *theoretical* antitheses themselves is possible *only* in a *practical* way, only through the practical energy of man"; "all social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice."[4] The current System, though currently manifesting itself as an alien power, is a product of human agency. As such, it demands and is amenable to human action for change. It is also an objective obstruction to such activity. The mystification of this System presents a subjective obstruction.

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[4] Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts" and "Theses on Feuerbach," in *Early Writings*, trans. Gregor Benton (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1975), 356, 354, 423 (VIII).

PROLOGUE

ADORNO MEETS BESSIE SMITH: A CAUTIONARY TALE

> Alice thought the lowdown music (and in Illinois it was worse than here) had something to do with the silent black women and men marching down Fifth Avenue to advertise their anger over two hundred dead in East St. Louis, two of whom were her sister and brother-in-law, killed in the riots. So many whites killed the papers would not print the number.
>
> --Toni Morrison, *Jazz*

I do not mean to enter the debate over Adorno's comments on jazz in the *Musiksoziologie*, *Prismen*, and other places, his aversion to popular forms, his unabashed Eurocentrism, his composer's privileging of the score over the performance and the performance over the performer.[1] Although all these things must enter into that argument, more interesting questions arise now that jazz manifests all the characteristics of a fully-fledged, global musical movement--from its banal and its culture-industrial to its modernist and post-modernist avant garde--including strong ties and cross-fertilizations with the other schools of European modernism. By this I mean to imply (among other things) that jazz now envisions itself in significant ways in relation to the musical history of the West. Jazz here comes face to face with the disaster of its own success: it is named, it enters the symbolic, it sells. And it disintegrates. Adorno did not live to hear *Bitches Brew*, the sound of jazz on the run; he would not have recognised it for what it was.

Readers familiar with the narrative of the deconstruction of the category

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[1] Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music* [1962], trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), 12-14, 31-34; Theodor W. Adorno, "Perennial Fashion--Jazz," chap. in *Prisms*, trans. Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber [1967] (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 119-32. For a recent manifestion of the debate, see Michael Chanan, "A Quartet for Our Times," *New Left Review*, no. 201 (September/October 1993): 101-111.

'Literature' and its power/knowledge matrix will recognise this plot: the other comes back to haunt. It lays out (there) in the logic of its marginality, secretly absorbed in its transgressions, its powerlessness, driven by desire. Sooner than anyone expects, moles and insurgents return from missions to the 'first' world, bearing tidings of difference, expulsion, and (surprise of surprises) dependency. The appearance of survivors marks the crisis of the discourse of purity on both sides of No Man's Land.

This fracture, this crisis, of literature and music is not, then, strictly, nor even primarily a crisis of aesthetics. It is the crisis of the geography of power which sustains the mystification of the axiology of Literature and Music. As the other becomes visible, asserting claims to canonicity or even merely pluralistic mutual dependency, the walls are breached. Rome becomes just another node on the maps of reading. Of course, the barbarians thus make good their claims to citizenship, only to find that their achievement also disappears in Rome's fall, and also in a new history in which the walls are ridiculed as illusions, although they stand strangely undisturbed between privilege and the shanties. The moment of the other's entrance is postponed indefinitely by, among other things, the consequent unleashing of heterogeneity across the entire field, notably within the other. Both sides experience these losses (receiving names and their histories) as crises of tradition, authority, and rigour (discipline). For the outside, these are new terms of struggle, borrowed from elsewhere for the purposes of purging its embarrassing history and new-found difference from itself, both of which threaten to re-inscribe its exclusion. For the inside, these are rusty but familiar tropes, now awakened from their complacent somnolence, brought out and shined up to meet the needs of battle.

How does jazz fit this narrative? The history of African-American music is inseparable from the history of American racism. This is one place where Adorno went wrong. In treating jazz within the criticism of "pseudo-individualization," Adorno reduces it to mere "U-Musik," yet another mutation of mass culture, yet another "captive of the culture industry and thus of musical and social conformism,"[2] easy enough to dismiss. For Adorno, jazz was an internal rebellion, a heresy within popular music with "the potential of a musical breakout," but which inevitably (internally) failed and assimilated. I should note here that 'jazz', of course, preceded the "mass culture" as Adorno knew it. His occlusion of this history (merely "the lament of unfreedom with its oppressed confirmation"[3]) is instructive. Following Winthrop Sargeant, Adorno explained jazz's historical emergence and development as "a sportive acoustical occasion for normal citizens to gather at," an occasion of submission or regression.[4] Yet this verdict and sentence contains a silence which makes all the difference: the attendees of these occasions were not "normal citizens"; they were not citizens at all. They were black. To view jazz as signifying merely a musical alternative for bored bourgeois teenagers is to miss the whole point of its real relation to white Euroamerican culture. I thus argue for an understanding of jazz that takes as a starting point the singular historical space where some African-Americans pursued real individuation--resistance, subjectivity, and identity--through a music of their own; conversely, the ambivalent space where the desire to escape the logic of marginality shot itself into the studios and concert venues favoured by white audiences, white critics, and white capital. In this light, its "impotence," the feebleness of its rebellion, and its profane revenge upon art read somewhat differently.[5]

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[2] Adorno, *Introduction*, 33-34.

Now we find ourselves just past this stage. Perhaps this means jazz is dead, as the vanishing of Literature is spurred on by *and* threatens to spell an end to feminist and African-American literary criticism. Though American racism is alive and well, 'jazz' as a vehicle for and enabling effect of African-American subjectivity and agency may have passed as its subject becomes European axiology (in all its forms) and music history, as it disappears into the vortex of that fantasmatic identity. Musical forms experience their relativity as a rupture in the field of value on which they play. Both jazz and 'legit' respond by struggling to shore up their positions with tradition, authority, and rigour. In jazz, this hopeless discourse is best represented by cross-over trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, who, in a recent issue of *Down Beat*, says, "We need a curriculum, we need a canon."[6] This is a highly coded statement involving multiple references to the institutions of American High Culture (e.g., Lincoln Center), American musical nationalism, Marsalis's doctrine of the perpetual modernity (fashion?) of jazz music, and the implosion of the American city, notably urban education. His project has much in common with the labours of other African-American cultural workers to further the possibilities of inclusion. "Everybody wants [this music], they're ready for change, and they're ready for positive change, and they're ready to start trying to get together. They're tired of fighting each other, they're tired of being white and black. People are ready to be Americans, and that's why it's time for jazz."[7] One cannot help asking who, in fact, wants this music and why, and what evidence might be marshalled to show that white people are tired of being white. Nevertheless, this work is important, perhaps indispensable for rewriting the script of American history to include and empower the history of African-Americans and their momentous achievements. One *must* and cannot help *wanting* to walk through the door of the canon, a decorous guest at someone else's party. However, as those involved in the culture wars on other fronts know, inclusion comes at a steep price. First, it means re-writing the history of jazz as 'America's classical music'. Perhaps inevitably, this rhetoric of the centre abstracts jazz from the genealogy of American racism, gaining entrance by co-conspiring to hide the 'problem' of its genesis (*Entstehungsgeschichte*) or provenance (*Herkunft*) as a radical critique of white America. On the individual level, the African-American musical artist is abstracted from his or her history, community, and suffering, now re-membered as the tragicomic Romantic genius or tribal curiosity. This is the problem of appropriation.[8] Gone is the rage, the despair, the memory, the police brutality, and, perhaps most importantly, the intelligibility of the space and tools which jazz and blues made available for black-American community and agency.[9] As the above quote from Marsalis makes clear, jazz is no longer to be considered "black." It is now "American": made in America, by and for Americans. Sounds strangely like Adorno: the presumption of the centrality of Euroamerican music threatens to wrestle even those few who *broke out* back into Adorno's portrait of their regression. And, once again, is there any doubt what colour the Americans are?

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[3] Adorno, *Prisms*, 122.

[4] Adorno, *Prisms*, 129-32; Adorno, *Introduction*, 33-34.

[5] Adorno, *Prisms*, 132. This is not to say that jazz is not 'great' music or autonomous, that its merits as music are absorbed by its social history. But that is not my focus here; besides, when is music ever *just* music anymore?

---

[6] Howard Reich, "Wynton's Decade: Creating a Canon," *Down Beat*, December 1992, 20.

[7] Reich, "Wynton's Decade," 21.

Second, as is the nature of canonicity, this project of inclusion involves the writing of an official history of jazz, one in which some jazz and some musicians are clearly more deserving of canonical status than others. Desert, in this case, signifies usefulness in the support for Marsalis's project. Thus, the later Miles Davis was and remains "a hindrance. . . . He was like a great general who goes over to the other side." This is, among other things, the other side of the coin, the problem of (self-) representation. As Marsalis says, "[Miles] made things more difficult for me, because I was trying to build jazz up, and represent it."[10]

The exclusion of the later Miles Davis (beginning with *Bitches Brew*) from Marsalis's canon is worth exploring, because Davis remained firmly within his own experience of jazz as a distinctly black music, its history and meaning intertwined with the reality of American racism. Davis was born in May 1926 in East St. Louis, only nine years after the brutal slaughter of that city's 1917 'race riots' (I put this in quotation marks because the official name hides the true nature of the events). Like most other black musicians of his generation and ours, he experienced overt racism throughout his life. Davis seemed to define himself throughout his life first and foremost as, among other things, a *black musician*, each identity defining the other. As a *black* musician, Davis rejected what he called "bowing and grinning" before white critics and white audiences (exemplified for Davis by Louis Armstrong), preferring to force those audiences to approach his music on his own terms (itself an act of war). As a black *musician*, he attempted vigilantly to maintain the vitality and the independence of the music by constantly advancing in front of the stylistic labels used in the distribution apparatus. In this way he retained his identity through innovation, resisting appropriation and the oppressive logic of tradition. Davis's attitude is tersely summed up in this resonant statement: "Wynton Marsalis? . . . 'Preserve this' and 'preserve that'--the way we're going we'll have blacks back on the plantation."[11]

---

[8] See Dionne Brand's provocative discussion of Lester Young, Thelonious Monk, the Blues, and appropriation generally, in "Who Can Speak for Whom?" *Brick*, no. 46 (Summer 1993): 13-20.

[9] Johwanna Alleyne, "Music as a Source of History: Black American Women," Paper presented for the Women's Studies Speaker Series, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, 22 September 1993. In this presentation, Alleyne told the story of the black women singers of the 1920s blues. She emphasised the lyrics and musical style as evidence of the formation of a resistant, resilient black woman's agency, departing in an innovative way from the accustomed script of their double oppression or, perhaps more commonly, invisibility.

[10] Reich, "Wynton's Decade," 17. It is worth noting in this context that this official history is almost exclusively male. For example, Alleyne's presentation cited above showed that the blues of the 1920s was in significant ways the instrument of women, like Alberta Hunter, Sippie Wallace, and Bessie Smith. Nevertheless, the official/American-nationalist/culture-industry history of the blues begins with Robert Johnson and continues through a lineage of black (and a few white) men.

Whatever one's opinion of where Miles Davis went in the '80s and early '90s, the resistance to canonization by Davis and other jazz musicians has opened a space (not a road) now inhabited by, among others, many young black musicians such as Greg Osby, Geri Allen, Lester Bowie, Steve Coleman, Jon Faddis, and Vernon Reid. The narrative of 'jazz' has become that of the hip-hop nation.[12] Of course, many veteran musicians also participate and lead the way, such as Roscoe Mitchell and the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Dewey Redman, and Julius Hemphill. In a recent interview, Osby and Bowie excoriated Marsalis (along with *Down Beat* itself and the white critical establishment) for his stand:

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[11] "Miles Davis: A Life in Four Scenes," *Musician*, December 1991, 62. See also Davis's autobiography, with Quincy Troupe, *Miles: The Autobiography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 83, 358-361. Dionne Brand, in the article cited (n. 8) makes this comment concerning a recent revival of *Showboat* in the city of North York, Ontario: "Like, the conservatives say let's put on *Showboat*, it's our heritage, it's a classic for god's sake! We say classic my ass. Classic racism huh? Classic white interpretation of slavery, classic white romanticism of that brutal institution, classic white heterosexual fantasy predicated on Black servitude. It's classic all right. Now the liberals, who pose as opposition, say well while it is an unfortunate choice, now it's censorship *not* to put *Showboat* on. I guess we probably infringed on somebody's right to own property when we rebelled against slavery. . . . The thing is, pieces of the past are always swept away in search of a more humane society. What makes this piece so hard for white people to let go? . . . White racial memory, I say, nostalgia, a deep longing for a racist past" (15).

[12] See Brian Cross, *It's Not About a Salary...* (London: Verso, 1993).

> GO: This isn't a tirade against [Marsalis] or the institution he represents or anything like that. These are just observations. When things are misappropriated, I have to address it myself. He's a good brother, he's cool, and everything; but his dogma, his rantings, some of those things are unforgivable.
> LB: Why is it that these sorts of responsibilities are pressed on a negative person? He even accused Miles of treason. . . . Wynton's trying to tamper with the music's development, and I see some kind of evil overlay on that.
> GO: Unwittingly, people like that become a pawn, they become an agent for those who would like to suppress creative intent.
> LB: Jazz is not something you put into the repertoire, it's a living, breathing, young, baby music.[13]

Keith Jarrett, like Marsalis a cross-over musician, has also taken up Davis's fight. In the following series of quotes from a recent interview in which he defends Davis, he explicitly recognises the dangers of naming and canonization, despite their obvious pedagogical and political advantages:

> Jazz, more than any other kind of music, depends on the player's consciousness. As a result, . . . there is no more important kind of music. Jazz is alive, if it is alive, only if jazz players are alive.
>
> If you could take a vacuum cleaner and vacuum away all the stuff that surrounds music, including the names of it, you would be in a position to remember that Charlie Parker wasn't playing bebop.
>
> If we said, "Our approach is one of a bebop trio," we'd never get around to sounding like bebop players. We would be bebop *pray*-ers, doing prayers to

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[13] Kevin Whitehead, "Jazz Rebels: Lester Bowie and Greg Osby," *Down Beat*, August 1993, 19. One must be vigilently critical of these arguments as well. Music's development is always already tampered with--here in this context especially by the relations of production and distribution. These so-called "rebels" are themselves being tampered with and profiting from the recent commercial success of jazz, in part brought on by the project of Marsalis. This in addition to being privileged both on the scale of the music business and in terms of the world's socio-economic relations. But calling these musicians "rebels" itself speaks the irresistible centripetal force of the American cultural vortex and canonical predicament. This is not to say that this problem is central to their *practice*; fortunately, they are in fact far ahead of my or the culture industry's names for them, including "rebels."

> the bebop church. . . . Bebop isn't going to disappear if people are aware. But it will disappear . . . unless there are actual players who inspire listeners to say, "This is valid. This is happening."[14]

The statements of Jarrett, Osby, and Bowie beg some crucial questions raised by radical critics of artistic production, Adorno among them, for example, the determinants of this artistic production and consciousness and the interests served by privileging artists and "creative" achievement while fetishising art objects. They seem to wish to escape into a realm before and outside of history, before names, before language itself, in which they and jazz enjoy free play and absolute mastery. This is a claim often made for jazz by its "experts." But the historical moment allows these statements to be decoded and re-written as a contribution to the status and history of the signifier "jazz." The supposed autonomy of "jazz" as art-object is itself a relatively recent phenomenon, perhaps a response to the separation of jazz from the history of American racism and the collapse of jazz into the other-than-itself. It finds itself in that familiar dilemma:

> In its relation to society art finds itself in a dilemma today. If it lets go of autonomy it sells out to the established order, whereas if it tries to stay strictly within its autonomous confines it becomes equally co-optable, living a harmless life in an appointed niche. This dilemma reflects the larger phenomenon of a social totality capable of ingesting all that comes its way.[15]

Jazz drawn into its name even among those who would resist naming may mean that the moment of jazz has passed. Naming and proper-ing spell the death of jazz, the very measure of its success marking its passing. To be itself, jazz must remain nameless. Jazz must also strive for the end of its namelessness, but *as* a name, Jazz is other than itself.

So jazz has become a burden to itself. Yet as Jarrett says, jazz *is* about consciousness, and if it cannot be free, it is at least "oppositional."[16] It can continue to be one name of the resistance and oppositional subjectivity for African-Americans forced outside dominant power/knowledge, or in other words, a name without History. In the depoliticised culture of leisure, jazz and jazz musicians can remain alive "outside" (as they call it), refusing to cede its accomplishments to the appropriators and the self-styled representatives, to the hard-core cultural imperialists, or to the culture industry. It can keep alive its genealogy of exclusion and its "social capacity to produce a differential."[17] It criticises by its continued noise, growing and flourishing "in the interstices of mass culture" as an integral voice of and in the "culture of the dissatisfied."[18] Perhaps it can even proclaim the death of jazz, insisting on calling itself Something Else, and finally mocking my desire as I grasp at it here by taking centre stage.

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[14] Robert L. Doerschuk, "Keith Jarrett, The Reluctant Virtuoso: Provocative Reflections on Creativity and the Crisis in Modern Music," *Keyboard*, March 1993, 87, 89.

[15] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* [1970], trans. C. Lenhardt. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 337.

[16] The concept of oppositional consciousness comes from Chela Sandoval, "U.S. Third World Feminism:

* * *

This narrative on the politics of jazz is told to introduce concepts which will recur throughout this thesis: tradition, authority, exclusion, representation, subversion. I meant to illustrate by analogy the current impasse within a named (pigeonholed) and therefore fractured feminism. I also meant to provide a narrative of the rise of critical thought and conflict in another discipline suffering the logic of exclusion. Most of all, I wanted to demonstrate the necessity of vigilance in all social practices and discourse. There are three particular cautions among many to be heeded here: first, the price of resistance and entry within dominant logic; second, the glorification of the system

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The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World," *Genders* 10 (Spring 1991): 1-24.

[17] The full quote is: "The operation of value makes every commitment negotiable, however urgent it might seem or be. For the *long* haul emancipatory social intervention is not *primarily* a question of redressing victimage by the assertion of (class- or gender- or ethno-cultural) identity. It is a question of developing a vigilance for systemic appropriations of the social capacity to produce a *differential* that is one basis of exchange into the networks of cultural [or] class- or gender-identity. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value," in *Literary Theory Today*, ed. Peter Collier and Helen Geyer-Ryan (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1990), 227-28. Hereafter cited as PV.

[18] A *denunciation* of the "culture of self-satisfaction." Simon Frith and Jon Savage, "Pearls and Swine: The Intellectuals and the Mass Media," *New Left Review* 198 (March/April 1993): 115. The outside may be called, more to the point, the culture of *indignation*. Karl Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction," in *Early Writings*, trans. Gregor Benton, 246.

through the glorification of its victims; and finally, too easy celebration of contingency, juxtaposition, multiplication, pastiche, and transgression where they veil the brutal consistency of the system under which these are the leavings.

CHAPTER I

CRITICISING LIBRARIANSHIP

> The objective obstructedness of the better thing does not refer abstractly to the great totality. In each particular phenomenon that one criticises, one quickly encounters that limit.
>
> --Theodor W. Adorno, "Kritik"

Radical criticism is a relatively recent phenomenon in librarianship.[1] It arose with the general social ferment of the late 1960s, entering the official consciousness of librarianship with the debate over the concept of social responsibility (ca. 1968-1973) and with the incorporation of the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) as a unit of the American Library Association (1969).[2] The questions which dominated library debates in those years have generally been exiled to the periphery for the past twenty years, the questioners now safely ensconced within middle and upper management, dealing with the 'real' problems of raising capital and subsidising computerised information retrieval and its software/hardware platforms.

Today, almost lost in the flood of IT-talk, management miracles, and millenarianism which dominates the library literature, a few dissenting voices quietly gain support and gather momentum. For example, Bernd Frohmann (social philosophy) and Thomas J. Froehlich (social epistemology), like Jesse Shera before them, write in a critical-philosophical mode. African-American librarians such as E. J. Josey, as well as lesbian and gay librarians, have also significantly resisted. For the most part, however, the political and intellectual opposition comes from feminist librarians and scholars. Feminism promises to undermine foundations, open up old questions and the politics of all practices and consciousness. As it has revitalised many public and scholarly debates, so it may do the same in librarianship. In this thesis I will contend that what has recently become known in some circles as *feminist librarianship* presents a radical critique of modern library practices on many fronts, while providing diverse, often divergent, alternatives for a socially responsible, ethically and politically committed, and intellectually robust librarianship.

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[1] I use the term "radical criticism" as it is currently in use amongst cultural critics of the Left, although it is no new term even as it is used in that domain; the historical meaning of radicalism--*fundamental* questioning or dissatisfaction and the discussion of, analysis calling for, and practice aimed at *fundamental* socio-economic and political change--is still very much current.

[2] Patricia Glass Schuman, Preface to *Social Responsibilities and Libraries*, ed. Patricia Glass Schuman (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1976), ix-x. The SRRT now includes ALA's Feminist Task Force, the leading institutional vehicle for feminist librarians. The anthology cited here is a good place to begin to catch the themes and tone of this criticism, along with E. J. Josey, ed., *What Black Librarians Are Saying* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1972).

The twenty years of feminist work in librarianship can be usefully (but not finally) classified into three projects. The first and most prolific is within what Thelma McCormack calls "the first wave of feminist scholarship," that is, "documenting the discrimination against women in educational and research organizations."[3] The gender biases both within library employment and in the professional image of librarianship as "women's work" provide a rich field for activism (e.g., for pay equity, managerial promotions) and historical and sociological inquiry. Librarians are gaining deeper insights into their profession through a re-evaluation of women in modern library history and through participation in the larger project of a feminist sociology of professions.[4]

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[3] Thelma McCormack, "Feminism and the New Crisis in Methodology," in *The Effects of Feminist Approaches on Research Methodologies*, ed. Winnie Tomm (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press for the Calgary Institute for the Humanities, 1989), 18. This is not to be confused with the usual use of "waves" in feminism, where "first-wave" refers to the earlier liberal struggle (18th-early 20th centuries) for the franchise and the feminist consciousness which surrounded it. Here "first-wave scholarship" is in the service of "second-wave" or "liberal" feminism. For further discussion of these terms, see chapter 2.

[4] On the historical aspect, see Dee Garrison, *Apostles of Culture: The Public Librarian and American Society, 1876-1920* (New York: Free Press, 1979); Suzanne Hildenbrand's pointed criticisms of the appearance which women assume in Garrison's revisionist work are published as "Revision versus Reality: Women in the History of the Public Library Movement, 1876-1920," in *The Status of Women in Librarianship*, ed. Kathleen Heim (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1983), 7-27; see also Suzanne Hildenbrand's alternative history, "Ambiguous Authority and Aborted Ambition: Gender, Professionalism, and the Rise and Fall of the Welfare State," *Library Trends* 34 (Fall 1985): 185-98; Suzanne Hildenbrand, "A Historical Perspective on Gender Issues in American Librarianship," *Canadian Journal of Information Science* 17, no. 3 (September 1992): 18-28; Anne E. Brugh and Benjamin R. Beede, "American Librarianship," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1 (Summer 1976): 943-55.

A feminist critique of information technology comprises a second and emergent body of feminist work. This effort faces barriers in librarianship, including widespread and uninterrogated technophilia and fund-raising techniques and attitudes which favour large concentrations of capital. But as it progresses, the undertaking will provide opportunities for serious critical thought related to the wider critical efforts among Marxists, feminist theorists, communication theorists, post-structuralists, and theorists of postmodernity.[5]

On the sociological aspect, see Roma Harris's recent work, which depends on Braverman's de-skilling thesis: Roma Harris, *Librarianship: The Erosion of a Woman's Profession* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1992); Roma Harris, "Information Technology and the De-Skilling of Librarians: Or, The Erosion of a Woman's Profession," *Computers in Libraries*, 12, no. 1 (January 1992): 8-16; Roma Harris, "Librarianship: The Erosion of Woman's Profession," *Canadian Journal of Information Science* 17, no. 3 (September 1992): 5-17; see also Kathleen Heim, ed., *The Status of Women in Librarianship* (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1983); Suzanne Hildenbrand, "The Crisis in Cataloging: A Feminist Hypothesis," in *Recruiting, Educating, and Training Cataloging Librarians*, ed. Sheila Intner and Janet Swan Hill (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1989), 207-25; Sarah Pritchard, "Impact of Feminism on Women in the Profession," *Library Journal*, August 1989, 76-77; Patricia Glass Schuman, "Women, Power and Libraries," in *Management Strategies for Libraries*, ed. Beverly P. Lynch (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1985), 444-58; Clare Beck, "Fear of Women in Suits: Dealing with Gender Roles in Librarianship," *Canadian Journal of Information Science* 17, no. 3 (September 1992): 29-39.

Christina D. Baum, *Feminist Thought in American Librarianship* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1992), provides a somewhat perfunctory overview of this literature to date. Baum divides the aims of this struggle of the women's movement into liberal and radical agendas, though, in fact, none of the issues she discusses addresses the ways in which library practice reproduces the structural oppression of women. Nor do any of her examples propose change in the terms of radical and socialist feminisms' revolutionary purposes (e.g., for education).

[5] See Margaret Lowe Benston, "Feminism and System Design: Questions of Control," in *The Effects of Feminist Approaches on Research Methodologies*, ed. Tomm, 205-23; Margaret Lowe Benston, "Power to the Enduser," in *Democratic Socialism: The Challenge of the Eighties and Beyond*, ed. Donna Wilson (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1985), 99-115; Sue Curry Jansen, "Gender and the Information Society: A Socially Structured Silence," *Journal of Communication* 39, no. 3 (Summer 1989): 196-215; Suzanne K. Damarin, "Women and Information Technology: Framing Some Issues for Education," *Feminist Teacher* 6, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 16-20; Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1990), 190-233; Mark Poster, *The Mode of Information: Poststructuralism and Social Context* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1990); Vincent Mosco, "Dinosaurs Alive: Toward a Political Economy of Information," *Canadian Journal of Information Science* 17 (April 1992): 41-51; Bernard P. Frohmann, "Information Technology and Human Subjectivity," in *Information as a Global Commodity: Communication, Processing and Use: Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Information Science, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, 11-14 July 1993* (Toronto: Canadian Association for Information Science, 1993), 56-69. Concerning Haraway's "informatics of domination" (though not in defense of the claim that white capitalist patriarchy has been superseded): While librarians generally respond to the 'telecommunications revolution' with unmitigated glee, even liberals like CRTC president Keith Spicer publicly admit the potential for the massive concentration of telecommunications capital and surveillance. It is clear that telecommunication is close to reaching the abstract instantaneity of capital as such and that both

The third aspect of the feminist critique of librarianship, the focal point of this thesis and what I am calling feminist librarianship, is re-conceptualising the intellectual bases and reshaping practical manifestations of librarianship (known generically as library services) in the light of the feminist theories, scholarship, and research methods, which are immanent to feminist librarians' feminist practices. Though always of concern to feminist librarians indirectly, this part of the feminist task is only just beginning. In her forward-looking January 1976 article "Toward a Feminist Profession," Kathleen Weibel argued that, during the last quarter of the century, feminism would be significant for librarianship inasmuch as it is a 'feminised' profession and a woman's profession. Weibel also speculated that, though library feminists rightly focused on issues of labour and professionalism, the most far-reaching impact of the women's movement on librarianship would be realised in its emergence as "a feminist profession":

> As a value system as well as a social movement, feminism demands a change in basic assumptions as well as an alteration in life style. . . .
>
> The potential for feminist librarianship lies in the men and women of the profession who hold feminist values. Their ability to implement the changes in the assumptions of the profession and to build new approaches is unknown. . . . Examination of library employment and services is the only projection possible.[6]

Weibel's influential vision of a feminist profession and her call for a re-examination of basic assumptions remains an active research programme which has not been fully realised. Most of the contributions in this area take the form of accounts by Women's Studies academic librarians who have encountered barriers to their practice in collecting, organising, and disseminating information for, by, and about women. These women represent outstanding examples of a new librarianship, a feminist librarianship. They show the emergence of "dissatisfaction with the ability of

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governments and citizens alike lack the resources, the will, and the critical purpose to intervene, let alone regulate or appropriate.

[6] Kathleen Weibel, "Toward a Feminist Profession," *Library Journal*, 1 January 1976, 267.

traditional library practice to accommodate women's materials,"[7] and a wider dissatisfaction with the ability of that practice to adapt to the changing needs and shape of the academic enterprise. Feminism will not allow business as usual in academic libraries. I am enervated and galvanised by these examples, and I agree with Hildenbrand that women's studies librarians have been compelled to "pioneer a new role that actively promotes feminist consciousness and scholarship. . . . *They set new standards for the whole profession.*"[8] These standards, I hope to demonstrate, embrace a rigorous, challenging, and responsible questioning and criticism. This attitude is almost unique at the present time and provides a welcome alternative to most research and practice currently pursued among academic librarians. I have taken it as the guiding thought and inspiration for this thesis.

Within librarianship, considerable disincentives obtain to the pursuit of this third pervasive, transformational project, the work of feminist librarianship. These include: the great amount of attention fixed on the first area of 'women in librarianship'; historical emphases in librarianship on *liberal* issues of access and on cultural conservatism; institutional rigidity on the national and local levels and in both functional processes and administration; the commitment of massive capital to technology; and most importantly, the iron fist of political economy, its mystification, and its corollary in consciousness, so-called 'realism'. These factors (with the possible exception of the first--if it is vigilant) tend to mire librarians in a pedestrian form of thought which spurns criticism, theory, or transformational proposals. The progressive wing of this 'modern' librarianship stresses small-scale reformism and nevertheless spends work-hours reproducing the obsession with speed, efficiency, and interchangeability, e.g., faster, more 'powerful' search 'engines', prettier interfaces, identical records, hard-/soft-/data-ware compatibility, schematic users, job enrichment, and networking. This kind of surface discourse resists looking back on itself, afraid of losing its nerve or of glimpsing its falseness and bad faith.

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[7] Suzanne Hildenbrand, "Women's Collections Today," in *Women's Collections: Libraries, Archives, Consciousness*, ed. Suzanne Hildenbrand (New York: Haworth Press, 1986), 4.

[8] Hildenbrand, "Women's Collections Today," 5; my emphasis.

So the second and third projects of the feminist critique of librarianship (as defined above) remain in their infancy. Yet they already begin to demonstrate the breadth, depth, transgressions, and interdisciplinarity characteristic of the best feminist scholarship. Thus, the three areas delineated are not exclusive of each other or of other disciplines and radical criticisms. In fact, librarianship now opens itself for analysis from the perspective of cultural criticism and its readings of class, race, neo-colonialism, and gender. This is clearly a part of the appeal and the promise of feminist librarianship, especially for traditionally insular library schools and for function-oriented academic librarians isolated from the academy they aspire to serve and which they uncritically reproduce as they manage its crisis.[9]

The work of feminist librarians and scholars has begun to receive recognition within library education. For example, during the Spring term of 1993, a seminar entitled "Librarianship and Information Science: A Gendered Perspective" was offered by Betsy Kruger at the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science.[10] A similar course was conducted during the Winter 1994 term at the University of Alberta's School of Library and Information Studies. The potential implications for library practice based on the feminist consciousness and critical, oppositional thought that will emerge from these courses are considerable. The work, criticism, and hope upon which they are founded provide an impetus and a milieu for this thesis.

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[9] Catriona de Scossa has explained it this way: "The North America of today is a troubled and troubling place for many academic librarians and 'their' libraries. Economic hard times and a staggering array of political, religious, and moral (im)possibilities, sustain, undermine or interact with and permute each other. All too often it appears to me, as I work, research, read and discuss, the educations, talents, skills and energies of practitioners go to avert disasters, attempt to control damages, cut as painlessly as possible, train users to serve themselves (rather than taking the time to engage with users in the processes of education and scholarship), and hold the forts, rather than till the soils, plant the seeds, nourish the crops and, with them, the teaching, research, learning and the making of a community of open and knowledgable minds that is my sense of academe. It sometimes becomes difficult, even too often, sometimes by force of circumstance, impossible, to practise librarianship 'well'. The energy or energies that should go to 'serving' the academic libraries' 'constituencies' 'properly' seem, on occasion to turn in on themselves becoming formed of entropy or inertia--both problematic and/or dangerous, however defined. And 'well', 'serving', 'constituencies', and 'properly' are not always clearly defined/definable or understood/understandable, in general or in particular. What I read, see and experience as a long-existing state of crisis and crisis management, including the appalling paradox of too much money to spend effectively that obtained briefly in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and whose consequences have themselves become crises or disasters, all too frequently meant that no solid, thoughtfully-constructed bases exist on which to found crucial and sometimes irrevocable decisions which must be made constantly. Academe itself, which is sustained by, and sustains THE LIBRARY, is similarly afflicted. The problems are reflexively imposed *and sui generis*." I thank Dr de Scossa for permission to use these remarks from a draft of an unpublished essay.

[10] Betty Kruger, "Librarianship and Information Science: A Gendered Perspective," Syllabus for a seminar, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois, distributed September

Dewey's Bastards: Feminist Librarianship and Me(n)

Articulating the itinerary of my identification with feminism would take me through terrain as various as fundamentalist Protestantism and Canadian higher education. Some of the sources are visceral and 'personal', such as reactions to the relationships between my academically ambitious female friends and their fathers (including their male academic father-advisors). Others are no less visceral but more 'public' and institutional, such as the right-wing crisis management in evangelical Protestantism under threat from insurgent feminists. Raised and educated first within evangelical Christianity and later in Erasmian Christian humanism, my protest against the exclusion of women from the priesthood marked the first moment of the rejection of my *Gründe*, my conversion to feminism, and soon, an active journey toward a feminist consciousness. Within this history, it was not a great leap to recognise the radical potential of feminism. In the church in which I was raised, simple requests for an amelioration of sexist work arrangements met with official resistance.[11] But arguing for feminism in such a context means more than anti-sexist work: it means rejecting the biblicalism which underwrites the forces of reaction, undermining the rigid sex roles of the evangelical family (hence the institution itself), and exposing the violence inherent in the evangelical embrace of capitalism, neo-colonialism (a.k.a.

1993 on FEMINIST, Internet discussion list of the Feminist Task Force of the American Library Association. The syllabus is reproduced as Appendix D.

[11] See Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart, "Women," chap. in *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 179-92.

"spreading the good news" or, worse, "harvesting"), racism, and homophobia.[12] Emerging from the total world of evangelical Protestantism in this manner means the pain of negation and rebirth.

What can a middle-class leftist white male would-be pro-feminist do? An immediate answer seemed to me to be suggested by a councilist argument,[13] that is, that revolutionary change depends on local coalitions of women and men working reflexively for the interests of the oppressed, here women. This still seems to me to be indispensable. However, the political problems arising from the practice of this doctrine in this particular historical moment are acute. The most pressing of these intractable problems is that of representation, in both senses ('speaking for', 'speaking of'), which I create by speaking here under the name feminist. The need for and of women to speak for and of themselves at this historical juncture, means that any participation by men must be conceived in terms of underlabouring, speaking-with, getting out of the way, or better, 'running errands'. Otherwise, well-intentioned men risk re-enacting the crimes of the past--subsuming woman under the generic Man, playing at knighthood, telling the girls what is in their best interests--and even perpetrating some relatively new appropriative ones, for example, feminism without women (patriarchal meta-feminism), feminism as radical critical pose and academic capital accumulation. This last danger is a product of the way in which feminism has been institutionalised: feminism as weapon in my own and others' struggles to get to the top of the academic world; to revolt against an older generation; or to claim a kind of providential fortuity that we have come on the scene here and now. In all these crucial and dangerous ways, I undermine this thesis by my very attempt to write it.

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[12] Though Christian fundamentalists clothe their rhetoric in the signifiers of justice and equality, their know-nothing biblicalism with its literalism and dogma of inerrancy commits them to the oppression of women. For example, I Timothy 2.11-12 clearly states that "a woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent." Attempts to finesse this statement, while retaining some imputed essence, prove excruciating and finally silly. At the same time, the implications of rejecting the statement and, with it, the unquestionable authority of the Timothy-author, are indeed radical, presenting the frightening prospect of a progressive, uncertain theology, based on the values of the fundamentalist bogey "secular humanism." For an account of the Christian suppression of the pro-woman attitudes present in the oral Jesus tradition, see John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 293-302; Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 48-69; Christopher Rowland, *Radical Christianity: A Reading of Recovery* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 34-45, 63-65.

[13] Patrick Goode, "Councils," in *Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, 2d ed., ed. Tom Bottomore (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 112-115.

Despite this awareness, or perhaps because of it, the ethical and political perils of submission before this silencing compel me to continue. At this point, several feminists provide guidance on how to proceed. Toril Moi, for example, argues that "the main theoretical task for male feminists, then, is to develop an analysis of their own position, and a strategy for how their awareness of their difficulty and contradictory position in relation to feminism can be made explicit in discourse and practice."[14] Moi suggests two moves: first, awareness and analysis; secondly, practice. In the first, the pro-feminist male cultivates an open-ended, auto-critical feminist consciousness. This process of unfolding, of searching, of understanding, unlearning and relearning, demands long tutelage, pain, and plain hard work. It requires fundamental reassessments of (one's own) scholarship and research, politics, history, knowledge, language, and subjectivity. It involves the recognition of the specificity of women's oppression and of one's participation and privilege within that oppression. What emerges is an insoluble, irreducible tension, a contradiction that brings everyday business-as-usual constantly to crisis. Moi's second move, the emergent practice, makes this crisis the stuff of discourse and action. This means neither talking everyday about the contradiction as such, nor allowing it to paralyse critique and resistance, but rather openly and vigilantly exploring, mapping, and resisting the ways in which what gives rise to the contradiction is constitutive of the everyday. Moi's position means that feminism practised by any person entails a commitment to make its problems and goals a primary focus of intellectual-political work. For me and other pro-feminist males of like mind, this does not mean attempting to dominate the field, but necessarily acknowledging a secondary and derivative though persistent role ('running errands').

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[14] Toril Moi, "Men Against Patriarchy," in *Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism*, ed. Linda Kauffman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 184.

Before I detail how I believe this project can be furthered in this thesis, I will quote Gayatri Spivak's challenges to white males:

> [I say to my white male students:] "Why not develop a certain degree of rage against the history that has written such an abject script for you that you are silenced?" Then you begin to investigate what it is that silences you, rather than take this very deterministic position--since my skin colour is this, since my sex is this, I cannot speak. I call these things, as you know, somewhat derisively, chromatism: basing everything on skin color--"I am white, I can't speak"--and genitalism: depending on what kind of genitals you have, you can or cannot speak in certain situations. From this position, then, I say you will of course not speak in the same way about the Third World material, but if you make it your task not only to learn what is going on there through language, through specific programmes of study, but also at the same time through a *historical* critique of your position as the investigating person, then you will see that you have earned the right to criticize, and you [will] be heard.[15]

As Moi, Spivak calls for a careful process of (re)learning, but she also stresses historical work and critique. Though here Spivak is speaking specifically of ethnography, her conception of the silencing contradiction as the historical problem of the investigating subject, one that can only be responsibly ignored under the flag of a careless reductionism, clarifies and enlarges my needful agenda. Of course, Spivak is talking about a much broader kind of socio-economic and historical investigation which must become the *raison d'être* of pro-feminist work.

I can only just begin such a labour within the necessarily narrow bounds of this thesis. But even in my little piece of the social fabric, the history of North American white male academic librarianship, a multitude of silencing, enraging factors inhabit all my efforts. Attempts to untangle this legion yield the following observations, a first try at a history of this speaking, investigating subject position[16]:

- Male librarians of the past 120 years furnish ample testimony not to the power of accumulated knowledge to enlighten but rather its power to legitimise and reinforce oppression. This is true not only within the academy but also within the library itself.[17]

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[15] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, ed. Sarah Harasym (New York: Routledge, 1990), 62. Hereafter cited in the text as *PCC*.

[16] Not a history of librarianship or libraries or their products, though much of the following section is based on the analyses cited in n. 4 above.

- Although library workers in much of this century have largely been women, leadership and control have been vested in the white males who have entered the profession. Thus, librarianship has been largely a male preserve in this and all other historical epochs. An investigation of library history unearths the centrality, for better or for worse, of Callimachus, St Benedict and the monastic tradition, Anthony Panizzi, the British academic research tradition, Melvil Dewey's anti-intellectualism and his exploitation of women's labour (their uses of these opportunities notwithstanding), Charles Martel and the previous organisers the Library of Congress and their tradition, only recently and partially broken, of service to an exclusively male, capitalist, white, imperialist American political class. The last now serves as one of the great instruments of accelerating neo-colonialism and is the most powerful institution in librarianship. In the modern period of the library's bureaucratization, male-held directorships almost invariably perpetuated this dominance.[18]

- During the modern period of librarianship, library practice has been reduced to functional-operational considerations amenable to Taylorism. More recently, these obsessions have led almost seamlessly to an uncritical embrace of neo-Fordism in the name of inevitable progress.[19] The feminization of the controlled labour force has been vigorously pursued as a matter of *policy*, beginning with the technocratic father of modern American librarianship, Melvil Dewey.[20]

- The concerns of North American librarianship have been those of its male leaders, prominently the capitalist State and hegemonic culture and, more specifically, the university. Until the nineteenth century, libraries remained elite institutions. The genius of the public library movement was the attempted transformation of this institution into a mass institution of Progressivist reformism, indeed, no less than the democratic mass educational institution *par excellence*. This narrative constituted the masses (i.e., prominently the working classes, immigrants, and women) as objects of education and indoctrination, 'betterment', and democratic participation. For the elites instrumental in this transformation such as Andrew Carnegie, this rhetoric was to be operationalised through Christian morality, Western canonical aesthetic and scholarly standards, and individualism and voluntarism, including political activity limited to the franchise and enthusiastic acceptance of capitalistic socio-economic imperatives.[21] The academic library itself has remained an elite institution. It includes among its functions: providing the mine and laboratory (symptomatic metaphors) for the production and testing of new knowledge (science), and acting as the repository of certified, legitimated cultural memory (official history). As such it envisions itself as the 'heart' of the university. Based upon this and related imperatives and their concomitant practices, it seems to me that the object of academic librarianship has been the *coherence* of disciplinary production of knowledge within the Western university and the communication apparatus which feeds it. Uncritical valorisation of the disciplines of the Western university and their productions is intensified by the ambiguous academic status of quasi-professionalised librarians within the university, which creates the conditions for a lust after participation and recognition within the academy and thus the suppression of critical thought towards it. In addition, a sometimes complementary and sometimes conflicting desire for power within the university hierarchy and for control of its capital resources heightens the ambivalence.

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[17] One could cite just about anything from the North American 'culture wars', but for example see Paul Lauter, *Canons and Contexts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 22-47, 210-224, and *passim*; Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "On the Rhetoric of Racism in the Profession," in *Literature, Language, and Politics*, ed. Betty Jean Craige (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 20-26; see also Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" [1979], chap. in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 103-117.

[18] See Hildenbrand, "A Historical Perspective on Gender Issues in American Librarianship" and other literature cited in n. 4 above.

[19] For a discussion of these terms, see Michel Aglietta, *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The U.S. Experience* [1979], trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 1987), chap. 2. The emergence of neo-Fordism in modern librarianship deals the *coup de grâce* to argumentation concerning its professionalism. In its subordination to database maintenance and database/information service, librarianship as currently practised shows its true colours as automated book (information) processing, merely another strain of white-collar administrator-functionaries. Feminist librarianship may take it beyond this irresponsible phase through rigorous critique.

[20] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, chaps. 6-11; cf. Hildenbrand, "Ambiguous Authority and Aborted Ambition."

Sustaining these roles depends upon the successful defense of at least two arguments about the library. Though ultimately the use of the library in the Progressive project failed, these assumptions upon which the attempt was based continue to have far-reaching consequences for the ideological production of librarianship: (a) progressive, hegemonic Western science and culture is the only coherent narrative of world (history and society) and self[22]; and (b) political economy is banished from the Library (the universe of written discourse, scholarly and otherwise), that is, the library is supposed a universally accessible public space free from the constraints and determinants of the profit motive and the everyday, a place of unimpeded communication and balanced discussion in which all ideas will be equally treated through collecting, organising and disseminating on behalf of scholars and the democratic masses.[23] The effects of (a) include that library classification and book stocks (knowledge and memory) reflect and reproduce the dominant culture, produce or secrete the disciplinary and epistemological identity which is their presumed object, support and participate in the colonial and neo-colonial productions of knowledge,[24] and serve the interests of the dominant gender, race, and class; the effects of (b) include a deliberate ignorance of the overdetermination of class, race, and gender (and their interests) and the centralised control of the structure and retrieval of discourse about them, particularly through the publishing apparatus and, more recently, programmers and indexers. Hence the external and internal delimitation of the proper field of librarianship to liberal questions of access to existing resources and their technical corollaries (e.g., choosing the best technology and teaching the use of the technology).[25]

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[21] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, sec. 1; Hildenbrand, "Revision versus Reality," 14-18; Hildenbrand, "Ambiguous Authority and Aborted Ambition."

[22] Melvil Dewey, who seldom minced words, lives up to this reputation here in his well-known address to the 1898 Second International Library Conference: "In this home education, which must hereafter be recognized side by side with school education, the library is the great central agent round which study clubs, reading circles, extension teaching, museums, and the other allied agencies must cluster. A statesman solicitous for the future welfare of his country will find his most fruitful field in protecting and guiding the reading of the people. It is what a man reads that shapes his future, which depends, not at once upon the rostrum and the pulpit, but on the book and the newspaper. In education we recognize that the supreme end is the building of character, but many of us have never thought clearly how directly this character-building rests upon the public library. It is reading that begets reflection, reflection begets motive, motive begets action, and action begets habit, and habit begets character; and who here dares question this, that it is not the air nor the water, nor yet the "roast beef of Old England," nor its history nor traditions nor laws nor geographic location, but *character*, that has made the Anglo-Saxons, England and her daughters across the

- More recently, the objects of library investigation have mutated into that inescapable advanced capitalist identity "consumers" (readers, professors, students) or potential consumers (everyone else) of library services, constituted as the location of needs and

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seas, the most wonderful people of the earth. It is not brawn, but brain. The dogs and horses might have the physical qualities, but it is the mind and soul, and those elements of true greatness which can best be instilled into a people through the reading of good and great books, that have made a race of which we are justly all so proud. Melvil Dewey, "The Relation of the State to the Public Library," in *American Library Philosophy*, ed. Barbara McCrimmon (Hamden, CT: Shoe String Press, 1975), 5-6.

[23] This is a theme to which I will return, but I will note by way of illustration Dewey's strenuous objection to popular newspapers in libraries (in the address cited above). Here I mean to stress the reason for exclusion, not the exclusion itself: "It is often said that the modern periodicals and newspapers are our greatest danger; but this, of course, is true only of the sensational and other objectionable types. I yield to none in my high appreciation of what the best kind of newspaper may do in its capacity as the strongest ally of the public library and the public school. I am confident that early in the next century such journals will be recognised as a distinct part of our library machinery, but I am equally clear that the worst journals, conducted merely as money-making enterprises, and catering to the worst instead of the best elements of both society and individuals, are the most potent factors for evil, and the greatest enemy which the ideal librarian has to combat in carrying forward his best work" (2-3). See also the great "fiction debate," discussed at length in Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, sec. 2.

[24] I will return to this theme in detail below, but here I will begin by citing Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Neocolonialism and the Secret Agent of Knowledge," interview by Robert Young, *Oxford Literary Review* 13 (1991): 220-51. Hereafter cited in the text as "Neocolonialism."

[25] Donnarae MacCann, Introduction to *Social Responsibility in Librarianship: Essays on Equality*, ed. Donnarae MacCann (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1989), provides a good overview of these issues in relation to the rise of critical thought, activism, and the social responsibility theory within librarianship.

uses or wants and interests (in the prosaic sense), which are subsequently transformed into the basic data of library science. This celebrated turn toward the user inhabits nearly all current *soi-disant* library theory, from Herbert Goldhor's "psychosociological community analyses" to S. R. Ranganathan's Laws of Library Science.[26] For the radical critic of librarianship, this focus merely follows from and supplements the ideological production of librarianship sketched above. It constructs a community of free subjects, aggregated as the expression of a collective, instrumental will. As with the argument for the under-determination of the library as privileged space, this is a curious reversal of the real case, where the contents of the collective will (and this particular account of it) are anything but inexorable or free, but are in fact always being generated elsewhere. Though this individualism may be read as an attempted end-run around the problems of control over the production and retrieval of information, it in fact only extends them into the no less problematic realm of individual subjectivity and consciousness.

● Library theory and practice is normed by the distribution of power within its institutions. It came as no surprise to me that, within the legacy of racism, assimilation, disciplinary production, domination, instrumental rationality and hypothetico-deductive science (including the desire of so-called information scientists to give themselves for the prestige of this label), the knowledge and emancipation of the oppressed and excluded, including library workers themselves, have been deemed irrelevant to the theory and practice of librarianship[27] (with of the notable exception of a liberal stance toward illiteracy). In opposition to this view, I will attempt to argue throughout this thesis that librarianship, as it has been known and defined by its leaders, *operates by* and actually *is* the suppression or outright exclusion of disjuncture by the other--women, blacks, the Third World. These subjects have been treated (*(be)handeln*) as *impossible objects*: subordinated within the labour process and, in so-called 'professional' practice, marginalised, 'deselected', misrepresented, and ultimately finessed out of view. This has been *the* job; this has been what allows us *to get the job done*.

My object is feminist librarianship. I have attempted to sketch out the history of my position, the enraging, silencing itinerary of Dewey's offspring. In its attempt to construct a practice sensitive to the concerns of gender, class, and race, my object revolts against the alienating damage of its practice imposed by the dominant white male, neo-colonial construction of the proper(ty) of that practice, including my desire to write it here as radical criticism. The brief history above, my history, and its crisis, is thus my topic.

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[26] Herbert Goldhor, "A Note on the Theory of Book Selection," in *American Library Philosophy*, ed. Barbara McCrimmon (Hamden, CT: Shoe String Press, 1975), 106-31; S. R. Ranganathan, *Prolegomena to Library Classification*, 3d ed. (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967), chap. DB. Hereafter cited in the text as *PLC*. See also Garrison's documentation of this turn in terms of the problem of fiction, *Apostles of Culture*, chaps. 5 and 6.

[27] See, for example, Walter J. Fraser, "Professionalism versus Advocacy: The Black Librarian's Dilemma," in *What Black Librarians are Saying*, ed. E. J. Josey (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1972), 12-48.

Nevertheless, the North American academic library remains an institution of the neo-colonial elite, and any attempt to enlist it in the cause of human emancipation runs the risk of being sterile or stillborn. My obvious presumption of its importance is constantly questioned and undermined by its remoteness from the work of radical social change and by its deep entanglement in the ideological apparatuses. On the other hand, academic librarians cannot simply refuse their institutional responsibilities and the power of their central position. I write in hopes that feminist librarianship will allow a feminised profession to resist the alienation of its practice, which currently demands constant activity, defined and controlled elsewhere, against the interests of the very (or potential) subjects of that activity, who are for the most part women. I write in hopes that feminist academic librarians may form coalitions which help clear the way in the responsible politicisation of the university, the decolonisation of knowledge, and the feminization of both. Yet even this is too easily said.

Notes on Words and Methods

I have not yet established my right to criticise here. However, this is an academic thesis and I must state my intentions at the outset. Marx's comments on the situation of Germany in Europe in 1843 and the object of critical philosophy set the tone for my project: "As soon as *modern* socio-political reality itself is subjected to criticism, i.e. as soon as criticism begins to deal with truly human problems, it finds itself outside the German *status quo*, or it would grasp its object at a level *below* its object."[28] Criticism of the status quo in library practice misses the point, grasping at its object at a point below its object. Finding the the real object of critique in feminist librarianship depends on critically analyzing the real social relations of the production of library classification. Criticism directed at the liberal and technical issues which dominate the field of academic librarianship confines its attention to the agenda set before it (regulated) by its opponents. Anti-sexist work in librarianship sometimes falls into this category. Such work is valuable and necessary, but dangerous when it conceives itself as sufficient. The problem is not only that of reformism and a liberal agenda set elsewhere, but also that such work only recognises the concerns of the majority of yesterday's First World feminists, ignoring the devastating critique of its privileged blindnesses by socialist, lesbian, and third world feminists and women of colour. The very fact that First World liberal concerns can now be called "mainstream" feminism, even named "feminism" itself by *Time*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and U. S. President Clinton expose the crisis.[29] Feminist library practice, inasmuch as it remains oppositional, calls into question liberal reformism, revealing that the field of academic librarianship as a whole is possessed of momentous problems, problems which contain within them the kernel of the crucial social and political battles of our time. It is these issues and the tasks they entail which should catch the attention of feminist librarianship.

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[28] Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction," 248.

For example, library automation. It has two primary aspects in current practice: labour process management and database access. As for the first, many feminist librarians focus their energies on liberal issues of access to power and money within the institution. Others address the hierarchisation of work in librarianship, concluding that work teams and work groups in a flattened structure spell the liberation of work for a feminised profession. In the first case, the labour process itself and the money and power which sustain it are left untouched and are even reproduced. In the second case, the labour process only mutates within the computerised control of predetermined processes which in fact allow more flexible (hence powerful) controls and reproduce the wage or salary relation. Neither the librarian nor the feminised support staff produce themselves or their worlds but only the library; they get *the* job done. A critique of the discourse and (re)implementations of gendered, neo-Fordist automation now so in vogue in librarianship would address the real social and political problems facing our society.

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[29] For example, Wendy Kaminer, "Feminism's Identity Crisis," *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1993, 51-68; see also Lisa Tuttle, *Encyclopedia of Feminism* (New York: Facts on File, 1986), s.v. "liberal feminism."

As for database access, the automation of research has significant repercussions for feminists in the academy and outside it. The automation of research brings it within the control of programmers, product developers, multinational information brokers, and the major orderer of information in the world, the Library of Congress, none of which appears to have any interest in the emancipation of women in the First World, to say nothing of the Third. Though the genius of currently existing computerised information retrieval--potential qualitative gains through faster access to more information--seems desirable and unavoidable, the machine and the programmers of its software demand that users conduct research in language controlled elsewhere, while the code dictates the contents, limits, and exclusions of the search result itself. In a real sense, *these developments bring research within the automated control of the labour process*. These are highly significant phenomena for the whole academy--the project of teaching, learning and inquiring--and one which presents itself to feminist academic librarianship for critique. Prominent critics from Henri Lefebvre to Gayatri Spivak call for a critical theory of information systems.[30]

Before I discuss my method, I must state that I do not believe feminism to be or have a method as such (here I merely express a certain consensus). In fact, feminists demonstrate an astonishing catholicity in their choices of methods. Yet feminists are unusually critical of traditional methods and transform them permanently at their epistemic foundations. Winnie Tomm explains this feminist approach to method as the insistence on the immanence of *interests* and irreducibility of *locations*:

[Feminist approaches are] not only bringing women's voices into research, they

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[30] Henri Lefebvre, "Toward a Leftist Cultural Politics: Remarks Occasioned by the Centenary of Marx's Death" [1983], trans. David Reifman, in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 86. For specific references to and my discussion of Spivak's comments, see chap. 3, "Narration 5" below.

> are reformulating guidelines for what constitutes good research. Ultimately they are contributing to a new theory of knowledge which begins with the assumption that research originates from an individual's particular set of interests and is invariably tied to the historical location of that individual. . . . An additional assumption, tying the first to feminism, is that women's location in history is as important as that of men. Feminist approaches are compatible with all other research approaches in so far as they acknowledge these two assumptions and their implications.[31]

The aura of agreement in this statement belies (or ironises) the radical nature of the claims against the foundational elision precisely of interests and locations (membership, embodiment) in traditional research methods. In fact, feminism has played a key role in, for example, the decline of structural-functionalism, opening up the so-called post-empirical space, and altering the trajectory of Marxism and post-structuralism.

Marcia Westkott's influential 1979 article provides an overview of the radical consequences for social scientific inquiry when gender interests and locations are taken seriously. Her feminist criticisms of the social sciences includes its content, method, and purpose. First, women's experience has been either absent from social science or seen only negatively as deviation from a male-normed norm. The entrance of women's experience makes visible "women's alienation from the man-made world" and thereby "suggests an alternative approach to social knowledge that is critical rather than functionalilst [*sic*], emphasizing the discontinuities rather than the continuities, the oppositions and the contradictions rather than the coincidence between persons and social contexts."[32] Second, feminist criticism "directly challenges the norm of objectivity," social science's methodological ideal (60). For Westkott, this implies recognising the dialectical relationship between subject and object, as well as heeding Marx's inversion of the idealist predication, grounding findings and theory in the historical experiences of women.

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[31] Winnie Tomm, introduction to *The Effects of Feminist Approaches on Research Methodologies*, ed. Tomm, 11.

[32] Marcia Westkott, "Feminist Criticism of the Social Sciences," in *Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences*, ed. Joyce McCarl Nielsen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 60. Page references are in the text.

Finally, Westkott rejects "social science *about* women" and proposes "an alternative social science *for* women" (63). Such a science "informs the knowledge it seeks with an intention for the future rather than a resignation to the present" (64). It signifies an "imaginative capacity to inform our understandings of the world with a commitment to overcoming the subordination and devaluation of women" (65). Westkott describes the crucial tension which gives rise to the opposition:

> The tension between describing and transforming which is first perceived in the knower, the subject of knowledge herself, implies a concomitant tension in the object of knowledge. From this perspective, women as objects of knowledge are viewed not as passive recipients nor as active, confirming reflections of society. Instead, the tension which informs the method suggests a concept of women in society which also expresses a negation: women opposing the very conditions to which they conform. (64)

A social science which fails to attend to this tension ignores the realities of women's lives and consciousness, reinscribing their invisibility and oppression in the purity of man-made, *a priori* abstractions. Furthermore, it can neither present the possibility of nor account for intentional social change.

The feminist library science I propose to study is a science *for* women. It analyses and reflexively understands the ways in which the practice of academic librarianship within the concrete social totality reproduces the social relations which alienate and subordinate women. It opposes these arrangements, an opposition which gives rise to an intention to criticise and change them. It makes no apology for its interests or its locations. It creatively uses the tensions arising from the alienation of women as the subjects and objects of librarianship and the production of knowledge, denying the validity of the epistemology upon which it is based. Thus it also recognises that it is constituted by what it opposes.

In order to find the real object of critique as it concerns me here, I have followed a three-phase method: (1) a programme of study, (2) a method of inquiry, and (3) a method of presentation. This is an adaptation of Marx's method as discussed in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* I, which H. T. Wilson has recently discussed as Marx's "critical/dialectical procedure."[33]

Phase 1: Programme of Study

The brief account of my three-phase method begins with a programme of study in feminist theory. The purpose of such study is an exploration of feminist oppositional consciousness which one then makes one's own. This has become known as "feminist consciousness-raising" (CR), a term borrowed from feminist grassroots practice.[34] This I attempted through discussions with feminist women and through the careful reading and re-reading of a great deal of writing by feminists.

I focused specifically on literary studies (primarily English) for three reasons: (a) The thesis research began as an investigation of the implications, if any, of the so-called culture wars for academic libraries. Some of the major discursive and institutional effects of these wars, for example the crisis of the canon and disciplinary authority, can be most fruitfully examined in literary studies. In fact, many of the contestants in this debate want access to, destruction of, or to theorise the literary canon. Finding feminist literary critics in the forefront of these contestants was also part of the process of the formation of this thesis; (b) literary studies is a site for vigorous feminist intervention in the academy. And literary studies appears to be one of the disciplines most deeply shaken and altered both in theory and practice by the feminist juncture. Conversely, literary scholars play a leading role in feminist theorising. Their scholarly production is, perhaps, one of the most significant bodies of feminist work in terms of volume, breadth of interests, debate, and contribution; (c) I sense a certain affinity, both historical and current, between literary studies and librarianship--librarianship in its concern for writing and communication, literary studies in its concern for the Library and the libraries on campus. These formal shared concerns are in addition to a certain bibliophilia, reflected, for example, in the preponderance of MLS candidates and librarians with an undergraduate preparation in Arts, the importance of which should not to be underestimated.[35]

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[33] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1 [1867], trans. Ben Fowkes (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1976), 99-103; Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1973), 100-108. My use of these controversial sections is most influenced by H. T. Wilson, *Marx's Critical/Dialectical Procedure* (London: Routledge, 1991), especially chaps. 2-4; see also H. T. Wilson, "Critical Theory's Critique of Social Science: Episodes in a Changing Problematic from Adorno to Habermas," *History of European Ideas* 7 (1986): 127-47, 287-302; Roy Bhaskar, *Reclaiming Reality: A Critical Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy* (London: Verso, 1989), especially chaps. 1 and 5; and Tony Smith, *Dialectical Social Theory and Its Critics: From Hegel to Analytical Marxism and Postmodernism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), especially chaps. 1, 3, and 4.

[34] Lisa Tuttle calls CR "the most important educational process, and probably the form in which the women's liberation movement is best known," *Encyclopedia of Feminism*, 69; Catherine MacKinnon has called consciousness raising the "quintessential expression" of feminism at the level of method, "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7 (Spring 1982): 535; see also part one, "Method," of Lorraine Code, Sheila Mullett, and Christine Overall, ed., *Feminist Perspectives: Philosophical Essays on Method and Morals* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 13-106; The study of feminist consciousness is now an vigorous and important area of study. In radical circles, it is linked to the Marxist concept of political consciousness. UC Santa Cruz's History of Consciousness Board is perhaps the best-known centre for this interdisciplinary inquiry. Sandoval's paper, "U.S. Third World Feminism," is both a product of and influential in Santa Cruz's programme and its sphere of influence. The method of Sandoval's "differential consciousness" is "tactical subjectivity," "interdependency," and "grace, flexibility, and strength" (14-15).

Beginning with the Modern Language Association's bibliography and the University of Alberta's library collection and online catalogue, I conducted an extensive bibliographic search for suggestive sources. I proceeded discursively, attempting to identify the problems, communities, centre(s) and margins, historical self-awareness, and practices. I discovered a challenging, contested, and inventive field, constantly moving in and out of names and positions. Or perhaps I should say it discovered me. Whatever the case, my sources are feminist literary critics engaged in practices which push the limits of the library, the disciplines, the academy, and language itself. They are critics with connections to many disciplines and many areas of feminist theory. As I hope to demonstrate, the theoretical contributions and the disciplinary practice of these critics aid feminist librarians in developing a critique of librarianship.

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[35] Kathleen M. Heim and William E. Moen, *Occupational Entry: Library and Information Science Students' Attitudes, Demographics and Aspirations Survey* (Chicago: American Library Association Office for Library Personnel Resources, 1989), 64.

Phase 2: Method of Inquiry

Phases two and three of the method are most indebted to the so-called Hegelian tradition of Western Marxism, particularly the dialectical critical theory of society. Marx described his "method of inquiry" as follows: It "has to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection." This is "the disciplinary starting point."[36]

Of course, my disciplinary starting point here is the study of librarianship and its materials within the School of Library and Information Studies. For the purposes of this thesis, my focus falls particularly on the categories of modern library classification. Accounts of the practice of feminist librarians provide the crucial link in this thesis between the larger world of feminist theory and the narrow but important world of academic librarianship. Such accounts have proven rather elusive. A wide search using all available research tools, including *Library and Information Science Abstracts* and *Library Literature*, turned up several essays by women's studies librarians in academic libraries who explicitly recognise or imply the unity and tension of their commitments to feminism and librarianship. These will be discussed in turn, forming the basis for the presentation. The extensive bibliography attached to the University of Illinois syllabus mentioned above was helpful in identifying some of these in the late stages of the research. Most of this material is listed in Appendix B.

A second stage of the inquiry involves Adrienne Rich's concept of "re-vision," which entered feminist theory with the publication of her enormously influential essay "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision." Rich defines the feminist approach to culture as "the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction."[37] Feminist criticism of librarianship as re-vision critically reads the texts of library science as interested productions, as effects, and as paternities to be realised, resisted, and revised. One cannot deny history or understand feminist librarianship without its defining moment of marginality. As I have been at pains to illustrate throughout this chapter, whether these texts prove useful or not to this struggle, in dialectical fashion, they remain immanent to the moment of their negation.

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[36] Marx, *Capital*, I, 102. "There is thus a sense in which one might argue that it is precisely in and through critique within an established discipline that one maximizes the likelihood of preserving thought's authority. Acknowledgement of the *disciplinary* starting point for critique constitutes a parallel acknowledgement of thought's distinctiveness *vis-à-vis* the reality that includes it *because* it includes it, as well as its inability to absorb, master, appropriate or achieve an identity with reality." Wilson, *Marx's Critical/Dialectical Procedure*, 28.

[37] In *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), 35; Catharine Stimpson's

This revisionary stage roughly corresponds to Marx's critical dialectics. Its method is immanent critique. Its aim is to place the object on new, deeper explanatory terrain, to reveal the fundamental structures and conceptions requiring radical change, and thus to contribute to their practical transformation. Early on, Marx used *critique* (*Kritik*) in the sense of an attempt to discover the new world hidden in the old. In one place, he explained it as follows:

> Our programme must be: the reform of consciousness not through dogmas but by analysing mystical consciousness obscure to itself, whether it appear in religious or political form. It will then become plain that the world has long since dreamed of something of which it needs only to become conscious for it to possess it in reality. It will then become plain that our task is not to draw a sharp mental line between past and future but to *complete* the thought of the past.[38]

This statement explains aspects of the earliest version of Marx's critical method through his relationship to previous philosophy and political economy. It involves a realisation and transcendence of previous philosophy through an unveiling of its moment of truth, its genius or natural necessity ("self-clarification"), a negation of its previous, mystified incarnations, and an incorporation of the truth into a new critical theory.

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definition of feminist literary criticism, from "Feminism and Feminist Criticism (1983)," chap. in *Where the Meanings Are: Feminism and Cultural Spaces* (New York: Routledge, 1988), is closely related to Rich's concept: "We cannot understand history, society or culture unless we graph the causes and effects of sex/gender systems. . . . The feminist critic must break such sex/gender systems, using language as a weapon and tool, and then labor to renew history, society, and culture" (116).

[38] Marx to Ruge, September 1843, in *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, 209.

Phase 3: Method of Presentation

As the method of presentation has *critique* of established knowledge claims as its basis and beginning, it proceeds through *concretion*, "the working-up of observation and conception into concepts," from the most abstract to the most concrete, finally completing itself in its real, dynamic, concrete, and prior/autonomous subject, the social totality, the demystified product of the "thinking and comprehending" of the "thinking head."[39] If it is successful, the historical, dialectical "life of the subject-matter is now reflected back in the ideas."[40]

Concretion is the crucial moment that enables and moves materialist dialectical thinking through critique to the real relations of the social totality. Wilson explains it as follows:

> Concretion is the act of returning to the object in its wholeness, recovering the object from the one-dimensionality and linearity of a form of human reasoning which seeks to detach itself from its nature through abstraction and artifice. Moments and momentousness are of the essence of the concrete totalization--the theory *and practice* of reality as concrete totality which thereby reflects its real, material nature.[41]

As noted above, concretion thus proceeds through the systematic "working-up" of the inner connections and movement of increasingly concrete concepts, which are now attempts "to reproduce through human intellectual activity the inner structure of an object both with regard to its internal relations as a spatial whole and its dynamic, developmental properties as a whole in process."[42] It is through this thinking and writing process that the investigating, theorising subject demystifies the object, bringing its contradictory, dialectical, transient, and relational essence to reveal itself in its wholeness.

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[39] Marx, *Grundrisse*, 101; Wilson, *Marx's Critical/Dialectical Procedure*, 74-79.

[40] Marx, *Capital*, I, 102.

[41] Wilson, *Marx's Critical/Dialectical Procedure*, 85.

[42] Wilson, *Marx's Critical/Dialectical Procedure*, 87.

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Thus, in chapter 2, I analyse the commodity of librarianship, that is, what I call the commodified reading endowed with negative virtuality always keyed elsewhere, whose superficial appearance in North America and other places is the MARC record. I critique commodity fetishism as it appears in academic librarianship through an examination of its inability to read/represent academic feminisms and their real relations of knowledge production and use, particularly their embodied, critical, dynamic, and conflictual characteristics (i.e. their essence, empirically and theoretically surveyed and analysed through five 'histories of the present' or "narrations"). I am particularly concerned with what compels this inability and with its ethico-political and epistemic consequences. This critique reveals the need for a feminist theory of the bibliographic apparatus and library classification which is able to comprehend itself, the obstructions to its practice, and go beyond both.

In chapter 3, I review some theoretical work in feminist literary studies in search of its mode and relations of knowledge production and its constitutive conceptual relationships. I pursue this as classification work in the idea plane (*PLC*, MD). My hope is not only to demonstrate how such work may be done but also and more importantly how the critique mobilised in chapter 2 may be deepened and broadened and how implications for the general theory of classification may be drawn. The most important conclusion from this review is that, following Gayatri Spivak, classification determines and overdetermines the conditions of representability (PV, 222). This recognition evinces irreducible ethico-political responsibility for classificationists and classifiers in a democratic society. It also bespeaks the limitations of representation under the current predication of value.

Chapter 4 examines the implications of the review in Chapter 3 for classification theory. By so doing, it makes the obstruction to feminist representational work in academic librarianship available for persistent critique; that is, it attempts to bring feminist librarianship as a tendency toward transformation to crisis by beginning to make visible the real social relations of current library classification work and hence their mystification which prohibits reflection upon their grounds. Therefore ,I discuss why, in their own criticisms of libraries' representational practices, feminist librarians do not transcend the mystification, though the oppositional consciousness of feminism in some cases pushes against the obstruction. Some of this work also offers important strategies for negotiating with these structures.

Chapter 5 concludes the thesis with suggestion for further research by way of a look at how feminist librarianship may use feminist theory and radical critique in a research programme which addresses classification theory--what might be necessary for feminist librarians to reflect on grounds through classification theory and overcome the commodified reading, thus 'restoring' its 'use-value'--and collection development in academic libraries. Finally, I briefly glimpse librarianship in its wholeness through the relation of feminist librarianship to the social responsibility debate.

* * *

So feminist librarianship is the critique of librarianship: the realisation of librarianship through the negation of its previous forms. Its aim is always change and human emancipation; thus it uncompromisingly rejects the status quo. On the other hand, it does not imagine librarianship as merely an abstraction from larger social forces, but heeds instead "the self-development of the concrete object" and seeks the resolution of "the social enigma of this object with the powers of its own individuation."[43] Furthermore, it must always struggle to avoid grasping below the level of its real object, that is, at its mystified or reified face. It does not proclaim itself above history; thus it takes seriously past practice and theory and reads itself as a historically-situated, symptomatic project. It recognises that to be truly useful it must resist and lose its proper name. Finally, it is pursued with the knowledge that, like philosophy, the moment of its realisation has passed.

Words

No doubt some readers will wish to see some attempt to provide definitions of certain recurring terms. For the most part, I will do this where the need arises as I proceed. However, I emphasise here one of the important arguments of this thesis, that "making definitions is a powerful act expressing confidence in one's perceptions,"[44] and this is a confidence I do not possess. One is continually distressed by "the peculiar logic of identity," where "naming oneself involves naming another."[45] Such a move is particularly troublesome with respect to feminism, for to define it is simultaneously to invoke (call into being) and deny (homogenise) it. Feminism resists definition in being one of the first social and intellectual movements to take seriously its difference from itself.[46] On the other hand, one cannot avoid drawing boundaries. After all, one can only see and walk so far. This is one's *province*, one's own subject (position), and one's access to language. But it now becomes impossible to so quickly claim one's self-declared boundaries the anchor of the known world.

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[43] Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), 26.

In the interest of providing some markers, I will set out provisional, working definitions of the following terms:

- librarianship: collecting, organising, and disseminating information[47]; each of these elements includes a preservative and creative facet.

- feminism: the "theory and practice to free all women" (Barbara Smith); "a many-headed monster which cannot be destroyed by singular decapitation" (Peggy Kornegger)[48]; "everyone who is aware of and seeking to end women's subordination in any way and for any reason."[49]

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[44] Cheris Kramarae and Paula A. Treichler, *A Feminist Dictionary* (Boston: Pandora Press, 1985), 117.

[45] Alice Parker and Elizabeth Meese, "Critical Negotiations: Calling Feminism Out of Its Name," in *Feminist Critical Negotiations*, ed. Alice A. Parker and Elizabeth A. Meese (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992), 86; and "the question is not just who, 'we', but who 'I', and not just who occupies the subject position, but why, and what that means" (95).

[46] This is true of North American feminisms in the last ten to fifteen years in their attention to race and class, true to some extent of Western Marxism during the past ten years in its attention to race and gender and neo-colonialism, and true to some extent of philosophical deconstruction.

[47] See *ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science*, s.v. "librarianship."

[48] Smith and Kornegger definitions quoted in Kramarae and Treichler, *A Feminist Dictionary*, 159, 158.

- literary studies: the analysis of written language in all its various relationships and forms, by those with institutional warrant in the form of degrees and employment in the study and teaching of national literatures. As the disciplinary consensus continues to erode, the definition mutates toward the same task with institutional warrant in a slightly different form, say, degrees and employment in the study and teaching of cultural, ethnic, women's, or area studies.

- feminist literary studies: Those people ('feminist critics') who pursue literary studies with the aim of radical re-vision (see Stimpson, n. 32 above) in the supposed interest of women and from the location of their commitment to feminism.

- patriarchy: a term "used in a variety of ways to characterize abstractly the structures and social arrangements within which women's oppression is elaborated"[50]; the "political structure which privileges men at the expense of women; the social system which feminism is determined to destroy[51]; entered North American literary studies largely through the first part of Kate Millett's influential *Sexual Politics*, "Theory of Sexual Politics."[52] Sometimes known as the prevailing 'sex/gender system'.

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[49] Tuttle, *Encyclopedia of Feminism*, 107.

[50] Kramarae and Treichler, *A Feminist Dictionary*, 323.

[51] Tuttle, *Encyclopedia of Feminism*, 242.

[52] Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 23-58.

CHAPTER II

READING LIBRARIANSHIP READING ACADEMIC FEMINISMS

> The library is on fire.
>
> --Michel Foucault, "Fantasia of the Library"

The Burden of Books

At this moment in history, it is important to call academic librarians back to critical reading. Librarians' practice--budgeting, data manipulation, servicing the database ('knowledge base') as intelligent help-utility appendages--increasingly alienates them from the substance of that practice. This may be demonstrated from academic library administrations' response to academic hyper-production: the virtual information commodity; and from the response to the crisis of intellectual consumerism (i.e., 'information explosion' and 'culture wars'): "information literacy."[1] Indeed, this latter is merely an introduction to and apologia for academic hyper-production and the library's response, a kind of consumer education intended to get them out of the gate and onto the academic fast track.

Shiyali Ramamrita Ranganathan (1892-1972), eminent theorist of modern librarianship, usefully discussed books as the unity of three bodies: the gross body, the subtle body, and the soul.[2] Librarianship has concerned itself with the primacy of one or another of these bodies in varying degrees throughout its long history. Each of these bodies has also undergone significant mutations. For example, the medieval discourse of the gross (or physical) body was book-craft, script, and size, while the modern gross body tends to be an object of preservation, storage (storability), processing (processability), and transportation (transportability). But of greater interest here is that Taylorists and technocrats seized upon the elements of the librarians' concern with books/documents amenable to their own interest in scientific management. Thus, the gross body grew to occupy a position of absolute primacy in modern librarianship. The damage to the 'book' broadly defined is perhaps irreparable. But the damage to librarianship ensures that the damage to the book remains permanent.

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[1] The major sanctioning documents of the pernicious disease of information literacy include: *Final Report of the American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy*, by Patricia Senn Breivik, Chair (Washington, DC: American Library Association, 1989); Patricia Senn Breivik and E. G. Gee, *Information Literacy: Revolution in the Library* (New York: American Council on Education; Macmillan, 1989); Patricia Senn Breivik and W. Shaw, "Libraries Prepare for an Information Age," *Education Record* 70, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 13-19.

[2] S. R. Ranganathan, *Library Book Selection*, 2d ed. (London: Asia Publishing House, 1966), chaps. DA-DL.

I suggest that Ranganathan's analysis lacks a crucial fourth body of the book, a body with interdependent referential relationships to the other three. In keeping with the current jargon of the field, I call it the *virtual body*. A full elaboration of this theory cannot be pursued within the boundaries of this thesis, but perhaps it is enough to say here that it is an insubstantial and infinitely/instantly transportable representation, its most important current manifestation is the database record (e.g., order, MARC, catalogue, CD-ROM index), and its genius is efficiency of processing, manipulation through re-combination, and display. In its current 'negative' form, it attempts to negate the other three bodies, reducing and minimizing its referential content, the content which unleashes the use-value of books, in the interest of expediting exchange and maximizing exchange value through its transformation into the abstract as such. It is this phenemonenon that makes this thesis necessary, for this body is the object of librarianship at the present time.

According to this conception, library classification currently presents itself for critique as an act of calling the book into existence for a particular library through the purchase of an interchangeable, remotely constructed machine-readable record. If no such record can be purchased, the activity of cataloguing/classifying the book then requires the local construction of the (same) virtual record to take the place of the book. This latter activity is a *cost* which is only worth incurring because without it the capital expended on the other bodies of the book would not be realised (materially or abstractly). What is more, even the increasingly rare practice of locally constructing a book's virtual body is constantly the object of 'streamlining', increasing efficiency and 'productivity'. This means making each record identical in form to every other, minimising differences of content, maximising interchangeability, and stripping library work of time-consuming, humanising intellectual effort (i.e., classification). Most of these goals are nearing realisation. But most importantly, once purchased or constructed, this record, this representation, for the purposes of library practice, *becomes that book* (*represents* it in the strong sense). The negative virtual body is equally the focus of acquisition, finding, and dissemination practices. It is the library's commodity. *Librarians no longer produce books-for-use but machine-readable records (representations) for exchange and manipulation.*[3]

Now the current domination of librarianship by the negative virtual body epitomises the ultimate alienation of librarianship from the book, most notably from its soul-body. In fact, as I began to say above, the purpose of librarianship becomes increasingly to complete this alienation by freeing itself of traces of the book through the abstract realisation of the virtual body. The book has become a burden to librarianship. The soul-body--in its complexity, its undecidability, its contradictions, its resistance to being read--threatens to interrupt the practice of librarianship by revealing the hidden violence with which it is suspended in the negative virtual body. To protect itself, librarianship exiles the library to beyond its walls.

The call to return to critical reading as a pre-condition of emancipatory practice (including representation), then, speaks a great threat in putting the virtual body of the book in its place (while not necessarily denying its potential significance). But the consequences of this ignorance of its own soul implicate librarianship in more than the disappearance of the book. As oppression's history and consciousness demand that librarians take the souls and books of women seriously, as the laughing Medusa sets fire to the library, librarians retreat to the estranged, negative virtual representations they store and serve, searching vainly there not only for the means to change, but for the reason it should even matter.

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[3] Here I provisionally suggest the product of librarianship and its appearance after estrangement. I have phrased it after Ranganathan's First Law of Library Science, "Books are for use" (*PLC*, DB1). My formulation critiques and transforms the First Law into a normative theory of the production of librarianship and its object. This conception is supported by Part D of *Book Selection* (Ranganathan's discussion of the "Book" and its bodies), which is fashioned as a commentary on the corollaries of the First Law. The final link is alienation and estrangement from (or fetishisation of) the product and process of production. Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," in *Early Writings*, trans. Gregor Benton, 322-34.

Although the literature of librarianship gives some weight to continuing education and academic specialisation, almost no attention has been focused upon the difficult problem of *reading* itself, not to mention the critical reading of which I am speaking here.[4] I believe that alienation from the book appears in the knowledge production and practice of academic librarianship in several forms, among them the following suppositions: (1) the soul-body of the book is necessarily only tenuously and schematically present in its virtual body so that the abstraction from the soul-body to the virtual requires a minimum of attention to the material book itself. (In fact, though the virtual is ostensibly abstracted from the real, the negative virtual (the dead abstraction) now constructs the real in the rigidity of its own representational apparatus: form (i.e., fields, sub-fields) and content); (2) library practice cannot be affected by or effective in relation to the soul-body or subtle body of the book, future books, or their relationships to each other (i.e., the library itself)[5]; (3) the virtual body, in its transferable fullness (on one side) or its innocent simplicity (on the other), is sufficient to the book through providing the ultimate means of realising its own virtual genius, that is, fast and cheap manipulation and display. In the way of ideology, these effects of ignorance of the book reinforce and justify that ignorance, making it appear natural, desirable, and, indeed, unavoidable.

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[4] A significant exception is the work of Clare Beghtol, notably her "Bibliographic Classification Theory and Text Linguistics: Aboutness Analysis, Intertextuality and the Cognitive Act of Classifying Documents," *Journal of Documentation* 42, no. 2 (June 1986): 84-113.

[5] Melvil Dewey once again provides a typical example of this attitude: "No [classification] number is altered merely to fit a new theory, for theories ar constantly chanjing and shifting classification is impracticable for libraries. . . . It is of comparativly little moment whether exact sequence on shelvs accords with the latest theory." Melvil Dewey, "Decimal Classification Beginnings," *Library Journal*, 15 February 1920; reprinted in *Library Journal*, 15 June 1990, 90. Ranganthan cites Dewey from 1926 recognising the need for interpolation and relational symbols (*PLC*, WA7). Ranganathan calls this evidence of Dewey's open-mindedness. But Dewey's comment applies to UDC and, furthermore, does not apply to reclassification. Ranganthan himself points out the fallacy of Dewey's 1920 statement quoted above: the important thing is *integrity of class number*, that is, *uniqueness*, not permanence (*PLC*, WA3), a distinction that seems not to have occurred to Dewey. Most contemporary librarians' attitudes, for which Dewey must be made to take his share of responsibility, are portrayed all too vividly in Ranganthan's ridicule of the 'one good custom' (*PLC*, WA5-8) and in his judgement upon classification work in North America: "the perfect simplicity of an enumerative scheme is akin to the vacant smile of idiocy" (*PLC*, XG5). The tension between

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Why should academic librarians read critically? First, academic librarians must avoid the dangers of becoming slaves to one or all of the publishing, classifying, or teaching machines, all three of which are (to simplify:) currently reproducing patriarchy and capitalism. Second, academic librarians assume a responsibility to the users of libraries and to the books themselves to seek understanding of what the collection contains, what constitutive relations obtain within those contents, and how every book changes with the addition of every other book. Third, academic librarians must know the immediate institutional context within which the collection exists in mutual social relations, that is, the academy. Finally, academic librarians must attend to how the collection is to be amended, how they do and should construct the use made of the collection and of books not collected, and whose interests are served by these activities. In short, academic librarians must come clean about the effects of books.

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Feminism presents this problem of reading for analysis as an urgent emancipatory imperative, a call for aid and alliance. But the texts of feminism, although perhaps at first seeming monolithic if a little baffling, upon further study are found to be intricately fractured and a perplexing challenge. Nothing but a difficult and sustained programme of study can begin to reveal the radical implications of feminism for the academy and for academic librarianship while doing justice to feminism's weaknesses, strengths, and heterogeneity. But how can academic librarians, alienated from books and their contents and occupied in practice with serving the virtual database, begin to read feminism, act feminism, and so bring

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knowledge-change and library classification is a principal theme of this thesis.

librarianship (through critique) to painful crisis (by no means assured of a productive outcome)?

The consequences of not re-learning to read critically are real and potentially devastating. Reading feminism, academic librarians find the ways in which they participate in and may help overcome the reproduction of women's oppression. By not attending to its participation, librarianship becomes merely a powerful weapon in the reinforcement of the status quo, not least by ignoring the ways in which its current practice erects labyrinthine impediments to the research of those who depart from the patriarchal disciplinary line. Feminist librarians read for their lives.[6]

Introducing Academic Feminisms

Narration 1

Academic feminism began with feminist professional scholars in the institution of higher learning. These women attempted to bring to their work "an awareness of the problem of women's oppression and of the ways in which academic inquiry has subtly subsidized it, a sense of the possibilities for liberation, and a commitment to make scholarship work on women's behalf."[7] These academic women can point to impressive achievements: Women's Studies, an explosion of feminist publications by mainstream and alternative houses (including several respected journals), nourishment and defense of radical scholars and teachers in the academy, feminist critique and re-vision of institutions and all sciences natural and human, and contributions of knowledge and hands to women's political work. Importantly, many in the network of feminist teachers across North America politicise their classrooms. Though few universities allow students to concentrate in Women's Studies, increasing numbers of feminist scholars teach courses across the curriculum to a significant number of students.[8] Before and after leaving the institution, these students in turn provide passive or active local, national, and international support for women's socio-economic, political, and 'cultural' work. Though few academic feminists harbour illusions about the current impact of this project on the patriarchal academy, let alone the society, the faith in the power of knowledge and education to change consciousness remains relatively strong in many quarters. Realised or not, the express intentions and the implications for change in the academy, in the disciplines, in knowledge itself are significant and radical, involving re-conceptions of the world and the human subject. Academic feminist librarians count themselves as members of the academic community which cooperatively practises and promotes these changes.

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[6] As Adrienne Rich says in "When We Dead Awaken" concerning re-vision, it "is for women more than a chapter of cultural history: it is an act of survival" (35).

[7] Ellen Carol DuBois, and others, *Feminist Scholarship: Kindling in the Groves of Academe* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 197. Hereafter cited in the text as *FS*.

For all their success, these feminists maintain an "uneasy alliance" with the academy.[9] While academic feminists recognise the capacities and advantages of the academy for the production of knowledge for, by, and about women, they also argue that educational institutions (including the traditional academic disciplines) are powerful instruments for social control, stability, and the reproduction of gender ideology.[10]

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[8] Johanna Brenner, "The Best of Times, The Worst of Times: US Feminism Today," *New Left Review*, no. 200 (July/August 1993): 122. Brenner reports 621 Women's Studies programmes in the US by 1990; 187 offered an undergraduate degree; see also Brenner, 122 nn. 68-70. In 1989, the U.S. Department of Education began to report separate statistics for Women's Studies. During 1986-87, US universities conferred 118 Bachelor's degrees, 14 Master's degrees, and 2 doctorates in Women's Studies. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 1989*, 25th ed. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1989), 230. Of course, feminist teaching goes on in many more classrooms and reaches many more students than these numbers would indicate. If my experience in preparing this thesis is any indication, feminist books are among those most in demand in academic libraries today. Obtaining *any* recent or heavily-cited feminist book, most of which libraries hold in only one copy, required placing myself on the waiting list.

[9] Marian Lowe and Margaret Lowe Benston, "The Uneasy Alliance of Feminism and Academia," *Women's Studies International Forum* 7 (1984): 177-83; reprinted in *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, ed. Sneja Gunew (London: Routledge, 1991), 48-60. Page references in the text are to the reprint.

[10] This critique largely follows the Marxist one. See, for example, Mary O'Brien, "Feminism and the Politics of Education," *Interchange* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 91-105. Lowe and Benston argue that the disciplines contribute to this effect as follows: "As long as we live in a society dominated by the male, white, corporate class the scholarship coming out of the disciplines will be their voice. Specifically, a sexist society will produce sexist scholarship. . . . The prevailing paradigms in the various disciplines arise out of social conditions and the social perceptions of those who practice the disciplines. In turn, the paradigms shape what can be perceived. There are strong pressures to retain these paradigms. Yes, if our ideas were to be listened to, they would lead to an intellectual revolution. The difficulty is that it will take a social revolution before

Lowe and Benston point out that the traditional "emphasis on objective scholarship acts to limit enquiry to topics which do not threaten the social order, since any scholarship which explicitly discusses the desirability of social change is seen as special pleading and non-objective" (53). Conversely, the feminist insight "that social context inevitably structures one's perception of reality and one's production of knowledge is probably the most revolutionary aspect of the new scholarship on women and is the main reason that feminists are convinced that acceptance of feminist scholarship by other disciplines implies a restructuring of knowledge within those disciplines" (49).

Lowe's and Benston's article represents a strong voice for maintaining a strained relationship with the academy. Their article is a response to debates about the 'integration' of Women's Studies into the traditional disciplines which raged among academic feminists during the early 1980s.[11] Based on the above analysis of the academy, they advocate a 'separatist' position for academic feminists. They argue that integration will lead to "strong pressure to focus on the liberal side of feminist scholarship" and that "even this material will be tolerated with difficulty" (56). The demands and norms of maintaining a career in a traditional discipline may tend to depoliticise the academic feminists' work and threaten their ties with the struggle outside (and inside) the academy. Once again, admission to the canon is offered for thirty pieces of silver. The point of contention is legitimacy, the inducement is an ear to persuade, and the pay-off is authority and influence. Disciplinary gatekeepers accept a selection of a certain type of feminist scholarship, especially that which fits and serves the boundaries and canons of disciplinary production.

Several points need to be made concerning this problem of institutionalisation. First, separatism is no panacea. Lowe and Benston spend little time discussing the dangers of their separatist position, including that their work at the margins of the campus usually acts as an alibi for business as usual in the traditional disciplines. As

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most of our colleagues will be able to hear us" (55).

[11] For a discussion of the issues and an example of the debate, see Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein, ed., *Theories of Women's Studies* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983).

Gayatri Spivak says: "Sometimes alternate institutions which might define themselves as 'beyond the institution' are allowed to flourish so that the work of the production of cultural explanations within the institution can go on undisturbed" (*PCC*, 5).[12] The hard work of confronting the vested interests and benevolent pluralism in the academy gets deferred until the hoped-for revolution. Although some of the most exciting and radical work happens on the margins of the academy (i.e., in some aspects of 'feminist theory'), academic separatists cannot answer crucial questions concerning: how and where the power of its work is produced, how it is constituted by its institutional position, how it is complicit in preserving the academy as a place of 'objective' or 'pure' inquiry, and what is the nature and scope of its institutional responsibility.

On the other hand, the danger to the health of feminist scholarship represented by institutionalisation is real. A great deal of the scholarship by and on women does seek entrance to the canonical bodies of knowledge via the canons of disciplinary legitimation. Predictably, these liberal versions of academic feminism, with their emphases on correcting bias, resolving contradictions, pointing out distortions, promoting individual justice/rights, and, above all, persuading, have been most successful in gaining entrance to the disciplinary gates. Much of this feminist scholarship tends to seriously underestimate the structural oppression of women, the role of the academy and its disciplines in this injustice, and the amount and nature of change necessary to end it. Here feminism falls victim to its own success. The institutional space academic feminists struggled to create for themselves in the 1970s now insulates them from effects of their privilege.[13]

What is most important about this scholarship for this thesis is that it has tended to become the ordained mouthpiece of academic feminism. These feminist scholars have gained access to the disciplinary apparatuses for the perpetuation of sanctioned explanations. These include prominently the bibliographic apparatus. This situation can determine what counts as 'feminist scholarship' in a particular discipline. It defines all feminism in relation to itself, and, to be heard, all feminisms must define themselves in relation to it. Many oppositional voices who refuse to speak within this discourse of persuasion go unheard. Finally, as Johanna Brenner points out, "For all the calls to pay attention to race/ethnicity and class, many feminist scholars have no connection with working-class women, whether white or women of colour."[14]

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[12] The statement is from Spivak's well-known *Thesis Eleven* interview with Elizabeth Grosz, "Criticism, Feminism, and the Institution" (1984).

[13] I will try to illustrate this process as it has taken place in literary studies in the next chapter. At the moment I am arguing through the general problem of institutionalisation as it challenges academic feminists today.

Despite Lowe's and Benston's contention that this kind of institutionalisation denotes the de-politicisation of academic feminism, it in fact signifies the political as such. And, far from being restricted to academic feminism, the dominance of white liberal or pluralist feminists in the academy parallels the dominance of what Brenner calls professional/managerial interests in the U.S. women's lobby. This realisation makes the feminist consensus of the early 1980s available for critique. That consensus cut across separatist-integrationist lines and participated in a form of institutionalisation not anticipated by or even visible within that debate, namely, the disciplining of feminism itself. The debate about integration served to deflect attention from its own privilege through a language of maintaining its own purity. The critique of feminism-as-institution threatens (promises) to bring North American academic feminism to crisis.

Narration 2

The critique is not new. Already in 1970, Frances Beal named second wave feminism the "white women's movement."[15] This powerful term named not only who was seizing control of the movement and its history, for whom, and whose voice was excluded, but also and perhaps more importantly what was being set as the target of the movement (i.e., ending the oppression of North American women through the inclusion of white women in public life). The *history* of this struggle and its *self-understanding*, of which academic feminism was and is a part, is what I am calling *second wave feminism* (ca. 1960-1990). Though attempts have been made to reconstitute second wave feminism by including a look at race and class, the selection of critical work I am about to document suggests that North American feminism is in need of radically different theory and practice from that available previously; that is, second wave feminism is at an impasse and exhausted, and a third wave is emerging from its achievements.

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[14] Brenner, "The Best of Times, The Worst of Times," 123.

[15] Frances Beal, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," in *Sisterhood Is Powerful*, ed. Robin Morgan (New York: Random House, 1970), 350.

In 1984, the same year that Lowe's and Benston's essay first appeared, bell hooks, an African-American feminist, took aim at "the vision of sisterhood . . . based on the idea of common oppression."[16] hooks introduces her main criticisms as follows:

> It was primarily bourgeois white women, both liberal and radical in perspective, who professed belief in the notion of common oppression. The idea of 'common oppression' was a false and corrupt platform disguising and mystifying the true nature of women's varied and complex social reality. Women are divided by sexist attitudes, racism, class privilege, and a host of other prejudices. Sustained woman bonding can occur only when these divisions are confronted and the necessary steps are taken to eliminate them. (29)

hooks goes on to argue that white women must begin to do the hard work of struggling against racism in the society, must relinquish ownership of the movement to poor women and women of colour. She challenges: if these latter women "set the agenda for feminist movement," what would count as a feminist issue (39)? What would count as feminist theory? Ultimately, "women must learn," she says, "to accept responsibility for fighting oppressions that may not directly affect us as individuals" (40). Finally, hooks suggests the necessity of a new kind of sisterhood, this time based on "solidarity," a long-term political commitment, a unity of purpose with an appreciation for differences.[17]

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[16] bell hooks, "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Between Women," chap. 4 of *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984); an edited version appeared in *Feminist Review* 23 (Summer 1986): 125-38; reprinted in *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, ed. Sneja Gunew (London: Routledge, 1991), 29. Page references in the text are to the anthologised essay.

hooks prefaced the 1986 version of her essay with an indictment of the "established star system" in feminist circles which decrees that "the work of certain individuals will receive widespread attention while other work will be ignored." Women of colour have suffered under this system. While a few "privileged voices" are tokenised, "theoretical writing by less known or unknown women of colour is ignored, particularly if it does not articulate the prevailing ideology" (28). Needless to say, the bibliographic apparatus, of which libraries are a crucial part, produces, thrives on (in crucial ways *depends* upon), and reinforces this star system.

Katie King re-writes the feminism of the 1980s with the "gay/straight division" centred.[18] King, a lesbian feminist, criticises the received institutional histories of feminism: "Feminists too easily believe 'we' already know the 'history' or even histories of feminism. . . . What is taken as history are some privileged and published histories of feminism, which have been all too quickly naturalized" (83). King's narrative of the effects of academic feminism's commercialisation in the late 1980s is of most direct interest for this thesis. She argues that "the academic and commercial success of feminist publication vs. movement, small-press publication has effectively recreated both a straight/gay split and a white/women of color split sometimes now coded as 'theory' vs. 'experience'" (87-88). Academic feminism is central to this process. Academic feminists are recruited to write commodified, specialised 'theory' for packaging, marketing, and consumption in disciplined, racialised, and eroticised niches. This process creates new hierarchies of value, with the expository, "rationalist" essay of academic provenance in the commodified book-as-artifact by the "single, valorized author" at the top. These activities are given and take on political meanings and have effects for political identities and communities.

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[17] For a recent expression of hooks's ideas, see bell hooks, Gloria Steinem, Urvashi Vaid, and Naomi Wolf, "Let's Get Real About Feminism: The Backlash, the Myths, the Movement," *Ms.*, September/October 1993, 34-43.

[18] Katie King, "Producing Sex, Theory, and Culture: Gay/Straight Remappings in Contemporary Feminism," in *Conflicts in Feminism*, ed. Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller (New York: Routledge, 1990), 82-101. Page references are in the text.

> These [official] histories and gatekeeping practices--although only having currency inside the feminist academy, and even there only among a relatively small grouping of feminist intellectuals--are currently disproportionately powerful in visible university and trade publications. They reify a division of labor which is sometimes characterized as the "theory" of white women, built on the "experience" of women of color; or in a move that keeps these ranges inappropriately separated--the "theory" of heterosexual academics, built on the "experience" of lesbians (89).

As hooks attempts to re-define sisterhood in a useful way, so King attempts to recover 'cultural feminism' and identity politics from their dismissal amongst academic feminists. On the other hand, King does not wish to canonise this recuperation either. Instead, she names her hopeful version of a postmodern feminism of "multiple identities and non-unified subjects": "the apparatus for the production of feminist culture" (91-94). In this '3rd direction' of her history of the present, the feminist press becomes the site for a furious elaboration of difference, deviance, and identity through "the production of proliferating lesbian sexualities/ethnicities: new genders, new sex, restatements and mixtures of sexuality and identity, colonialisms and decolonizations, essentialisms and anti-essentialisms, sex and language, sex and diverse bodies" (94).

King's vision emerges from the latent possibilities of feminism's splintering under the weight of powerful forces both inside and outside feminism working to contain and homogenise this "proliferation of identities." In 1991, Chicana feminist Chela Sandoval, following Spivak, names the institution inside: "hegemonic feminism." It is a trap, "a symbolic container which sets limits on how the history of feminist activity can be conceptualized, while obstructing what can be perceived or even imagined by agents thinking within its constraints."[19] The structure of this "container" follows the by-now familiar four-part theoretical and historical taxonomy, the "great hegemonic model" of liberal, Marxist, radical/cultural, and socialist feminisms (5-10). But, though it is rendered invisible by the histories and gatekeeping practices of this dominant discourse, another form of feminist consciousness thrives. It is embodied in "U.S. third world feminism." Sandoval argues that at the root of conflicts between white feminists and third world feminists over issues of race and class is the latter's refusal to be subsumed within or assimilated into hegemonic critical practice. Sandoval proposes a theory and new taxonomy of "oppositional consciousness" which makes sense of these conflicts as differences in modes of consciousness and which makes third world feminism visible as "differential consciousness." Finally, Sandoval argues that third world feminisms' differential mode of consciousness "is vital to the generation of a next 'third wave' women's movement and provides grounds for alliance with other decolonizing movements for emancipation" (4).

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[19] Sandoval, "U.S. Third World Feminism," 10. Page references are in the text.

While Sandoval's exciting work articulates a theory with which a third wave feminism can understand its emergent practice, Johanna Brenner writes a political history of second wave feminism which complements Sandoval's account of its exhaustion.[20] Brenner's extensive summary documents the class- and race-biased progress of liberal feminism, the impasse which this has affected in mainstream U.S. politics between liberal and social-welfare feminists, and, among other things, the ways in which centralised mainstream groups' narrowing struggles around individual choice have pushed out independent groups advocating a broader social and political agenda. Brenner's introductory statement on the impasse of second wave feminism must be quoted at length:

> The historic victory of the second wave has been to make women fully free sellers of our own labour-power. . . . This victory has helped to force a reorganization of the gender order--materially, culturally, politically. In the emerging gender order, women's subordination continues to rest on a gender division of labour, but one that is reproduced (like the exploitation of wage labour) 'behind the backs' of women through an ostensibly gender-neutral system of contractual relationships. . . . Women are more free to negotiate their relationships and responsibilities with employers and with men. And some, indeed a significant stratum of affluent, well-educated women, strike relatively good bargains. On the other hand, most women negotiate from a one-down position. (104)

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[20] Brenner, "The Best of Times, the Worst of Times." Page references are in the text.

Brenner is at pains to show that this "one-down position" applies doubly to women of colour (here and all over the world) who are bearing the brunt of the 'restructuring' and unimpeded circulation of international capital.

Brenner's proposed solutions to this political impasse serve to review and reinforce the suggestions of hooks, King, and Sandoval. "It will require," she says, "*a serious and disruptive challenge to state and capital*" and "*a broad and militant 'rainbow movement'*" (155, 103; my emphasis). It will require combatting racism in a serious and sustained way: "Combatting racism, on the part of white feminists, has to go beyond self-examination to include active support, material as well as political, for the self-organization of women of colour" (143). Combatting racism also includes defining feminist issues around those crucial to women of colour and working-class women. A politically viable third wave of North American feminism will also require: new, positive definitions of choice, control, autonomy, and self-determiniation which would demand the revolutionary changes necessary to create the material conditions where these goods are real and meaningful for women of all classes and racial/ethnic communities[21]; bridging the "defensive distances that separate movements organizing to meet human needs from those organized to demand individual rights to sexual expression," from social-welfare feminists to radical lesbian feminists to gay men (158); and "disruptive" theory and practice and a defiance which "undermines the conservatives' power to dominate the terrain of political discourse" (159). The four feminists whose work I have briefly presented show the urgency and the potential of feminism's incipient third wave. They believe that feminism can and must catalyze the radical, emancipatory social change desperately needed everywhere.[22]

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[21] Creating the material conditions of women's self-determination includes "broadening the responsibility for the care of children and adults to a democratized public sphere" (158). Brenner notes that the 'reproductive rights' wing of the pro-choice movement, a coalition which includes several organisations of women of colour, advocates "linking women's rights to control their own bodies to a broader set of demands that would empower women economically and socially. In addition to safe, legal, accessible and affordable abortion , reproductive rights include the right to safe, effective, affordable contraception; 'pro-sex' sex education; an end to sterilization abuse; universal healthcare, including preventive healthcare; care for children, the sick and the elderly in lively, sociable settings; good housing; a living wage; paid parental and family leave; shorter workdays for parents with no loss in pay; freedom to express sexual preference, including the right to be a lesbian mother" (135). This conception of individual rights involves strategic use of an idea with a high level of legitimation in North American political culture (n. 113). This strategy has the significant additional virtue of undermining and transcending the autonomy versus caring debate that currently dominates the political controversy over the family (136-37).

To summarise: in general, the time, place, position, claimed identity, representation, and interests of writer and reader are always at issue in any reading of academic (or any other) feminisms. The complications of reading are acute and include (a) the commercial/institutional effects of academic feminism and its "theory in press,"[23] and (b) the socio-political significance and purpose of the book in hand. For example: *those* "stars" *there*, heavily discussed and heavily used *by them, then* and *there*, and records of feminism sanctioned *by them* and fixed up with blurbs and four-colour jackets *for them.* Some other of the specific factors include: (c) the history of second-wave feminism (ca. 1960-1990); (d) the tensions among mainstream women's lobbies, third world feminists, feminist women of colour, lesbian feminists, and academic feminists, indicative of the multiplicity of needs, interests, and goals within and among those with various class, racial, or ethnic identities and sexual, political, and theoretical orientations within North American feminism and North American academic feminism; (e) the complex and disputed emergence of the theory and practice of a third feminist wave; (f) the tensions between the traditional disciplinary standards, most notably 'objectivism', methods, assumptions, and subjects, even the academy itself, and feminist scholarship, and a related inter- or post-disciplinarity or even a "de-disciplinizing" tendency often found in feminist scholarship[24]; (g) various levels of radicalisation among academic feminists, from bourgeois careerists to socialist feminists to anarcha-feminists; (h) the sheer size of the feminist project, along with the level of complexity and theoretical depth achieved among academic feminists over the thirty years of the second wave, a legacy now taken for granted and decisive for current productions but still contested; (i) often tacit assumptions about the nature of oppression and patriarchy, the sciences' participations in them, and what is required to bring about change.

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[22] I am not arguing that there is any such thing as "hegemonic feminism" as such nor "liberal feminism" as such. Nor is this the point that hooks, King, Sandoval, and Brenner argue. There seems to be, however, something like social-structural and ideological relations within feminism (including academic) that answer to these analyses. And even this is not the whole point. The argument is made in the interest of the persistent auto-critique of a position from which one must build (for third wave difference) that mocks the desire of non-feminists to pigeonhole and dismiss feminism under any given name. This includes academic librarians reading this thesis searching for 'the key', 'the answer', or 'the definition'.

[23] King, "Producing Sex, Theory, and Culture," 87.

[24] The concept of de-disciplinizing comes from John Rajchman, "Philosophy in America," in *Post-Analytic Philosophy*, ed. John Rajchman and Cornel West, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), xiii. Here academic feminism is both partial cause and effect of a wider questioning of disciplinary integrity, a major theme in discussions about theories of knowledge for much of this century. Rajchman speaks of Anglo-American analytic philosophy, recognising feminism only implicitly but suggesting the radical implications of

The narratives which have emerged are merely a few of many which could and should be recorded. But they begin to suggest the many registers of meanings and constitutive relations of any record of feminism. The institutional responsibility of academic feminist librarianship is to read and represent, thereby modifying these records for use in feminist work of all kinds; the purpose is to build for difference.[25] This cannot be accomplished with alienated virtual records; while academic feminists

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this type of change: "The move to other fields, however, has been more "de-disciplinizing" than "interdisciplinary": less a collaboration between specialized fields than a questioning of basic assumptions in those fields and an attempt to create new ones. There are the post-analytic mergers or amalgamations: philosophy-literary theory, philosophy-history of science, philosophy-public moral debate; they have supplied the principle subjects of inquiry or reflection, the *topoi* of post analytic philosophy. The creation of such new fields constitutes a challenge to the great Kantian distinctions between them: the distinction between science, morals and aesthetics" (xiii). Similar challenges can be seen in most if not all other traditional disciplines. Among the influences surrounding this crucial moment are Continental scholarship, conventionalist epistemology, the interpretive and linguistic turns in the human sciences and philosophy, crises of capitalism and the international economic (dis)order, and a reaction to the resurgence of Right polemics on the cultural unity. To anticipate an aspect of the next chapter's argument, I mention here that this process seems to be taking place in some quarters of feminist literary studies. For example, in their anthology of what they call materialist-feminist criticism (in which they include critics such as Lillian Robinson, Paul Lauter, and Catherine Belsey), Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt argue: "In materialist-feminist criticism, moreover, a more sustained focus on the process of social construction means that the category of literature itself is more consistently regarded as historical construction and that literature is apt to be seen in relation to, rather than in isolation from, other forms of discourse such as advertising or film [other signifying practices]. From this perspective cultural production and discourse at large are opened up to a radical revision in which ideas on every level are seen in relation to systems of power and in which literary--now cultural--studies become a mode of intervening politically in a much wider field." Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt, "Toward a Materialist-Feminist Criticism," introduction to *Feminist Criticism and Social Change: Sex, Class and Race in Literature and Culture*, ed. Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt (New York: Methuen, 1985), xxiv.

[25] "In other words to think of what we might be doing or saying strategically, sometimes tactically [to build for difference] within a very powerful institutional structure." Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "In a Word. *Interview*," interview with Ellen Rooney (Pittsburgh, 9 December 1988), *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 128.

burn and attempt to rebuild the library, and librarians attempt only to escape it; while librarians work to make books vanish effortlessly from their practice into a thousand digital signals *always keyed elsewhere*; while the operant hope is that someone, somewhere (an employee or agent of the government of the United States) knows. The heavy responsibility of modifying records of feminism for use compels academic librarians to return to the problems of reading, to re-embody books, to once again make central to library practice reading the exclusion, pain, violence, and negotiation of the process of the production, collection, organisation, representation, and dissemination of information. To accomplish this, my strategy here is to wrench feminism out of the context of librarianship and insert librarianship into some of the contexts of feminism, thereby bringing to consciousness the ethico-political commitments and effects (the real relations) of the current construction of academic library practice.

Narration 3

In order to integrate the first two sections of this chapter and open the way to the next, I will present an illustrative comparison between two books which are products of and tools for different moments of academic feminism. The first is *Feminist Scholarship: Kindling in the Groves of Academe* (1985), collaboratively written by five American academic feminists prominent in their fields and published by a university press. The other is *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* (1991), edited by Australian academic feminist Sneja Gunew of Deakin University, Victoria, and published by the commercial house Routledge of London, which sports an extraordinarily large catalogue of feminist works.[26]

Perhaps the best place to begin is with the empirical bibliographic details. (a) Title: What is at stake in "feminist scholarship" versus "feminist knowledge"?

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[26] The latter is hereafter cited in the text as *RFK*. It is a companion reader to the introductory Women's Studies textbook *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct* (London: Routledge, 1990). To ease the task of following this part of the discussion, I have reproduced both works' tables of contents as Appendix E.

"Scholarship" is a word steeped in the history of the European academy. The ancient root places this activity or fund of learning squarely in the institution (*schola*). It is really that knowledge which is obtained within and sanctioned by the *schola*. This is one reason why Madeleine Grumet worries that perhaps "the noun neutralizes its adjective."[27] It need not. But what this particular combination does signify is a new scholarship, scholarship redefined, or scholarship with a difference. It announces the exposure and the awakening of sexual politics in the disciplines and "a new set of questions" for them (*FS*, 6). On the other hand, though a certain kind of "knowledge" may be invoked as a synonym for scholarship, here with "feminist" it also claims a much more sweeping agenda which encompasses not only "scholarship" but many other kinds of living and learning. In addition, it is not just about a new kind of institution but rather another theory of knowledge. Objectivist theories of knowledge do not acknowledge such locatedness and interest as an irreducible quality of knowledge. So while the title of the newer book may promise to fulfil the radical claim of its title and range widely through whatever qualifies under the new name "knowledge," the earlier one implies an account of feminism as it has 'arrived' within the academy.

(b) Form: The anthology or collection has become a favoured bibliographic form for academic feminism. Collections are rife with political significance, because they are fundamentally attempts to construct audiences in search of a book. Audiences of particular interest to academic feminists include: those in search of introductions, those in search of authoritative summary, those interested in shoring up explanations, those who teach feminism, and those seeking several perspectives on pressing questions or those seeking to find the pressing questions. Each of these audiences raises issues of canon-effects, selection/exclusion, privileged histories and voices, authorship, inter(re)ception (e.g., issues raised by the homogenising/essentialising of audiences), not to mention the vagaries of publishing imperatives, such as permissions, availability, revisions, and packaging.

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[27] Madeleine R. Grumet, review of *Feminist Scholarship: Kindling in the Groves of Academe*, by Ellen Carol DuBois and others, in *Teachers College Record* 88 (Spring 1987): 474. In fact, Grumet says of *FS*: "Ultimately, the feminism of this text collapses into its scholarship" (478).

Feminist Scholarship is not a 'true' collection.[28] Much has been made of its novel integrated multidisciplinary approach.[29] The five authors represent the disciplines of History, Philosophy, Education, Literary Studies, and Anthropology. Their separate thoughts on their disciplines and the selected topics have been blended into a coherent account of academic feminism, its nature, its history, and its institutional influence within the North American academy. This synthetic approach contrasts with the increasingly plentiful disciplinary and multidisciplinary anthologies of work by academic feminists.[30] The result is, as the *Signs* reviewer put it, a book with "clarity of analysis" and "deft handling" which makes "feminist research accessible to both specialist and non-feminist scholars alike."[31] So here we see the move from the book's form to its audience. But the form ends up taking on quite different meanings for these two audiences. For the "specialists," that is, the academic feminists, the book is read as, among other things, an argument for a new classification for the study of women's oppression and agency and as an argument for the importance of work both in the disciplines and Women's Studies ('feminist theory'). For "non-feminist scholars," importantly including university administrators and funding agencies (significant gatekeepers), the book is much more than that. It is the history of academic feminism and the argument for its coherence and legitimacy in the academy. It is here that this audience finds its book, a marriage of medium and message. Political intervention before this audience is perhaps the most important aspect of this book. But who and what is being submerged so that this narrative can emerge and so that this audience will be served (up)? It is precisely difference, disagreement, confrontation, and a productive sense of crisis, both within feminist scholarship and between feminist scholars and the academy.[32] A less "seamless" form allows the emergence of difference, incoherence, and a multiplicity of dissenting and assenting voices. But this book makes invisible the impasse, the false whole, within which it is mired and thus does not show the way to build for difference upon the achievements of the second wave.

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[28] *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, 2d ed. rev. (Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1988), 21.7A, 616 [s.v. "Collection" 2].

[29] Nancy Jo Hoffman (approvingly) called it "seamless." *Harvard Educational Review* 56 (November 1986): 513; *Change*, May/June 1988, 68.

[30] The contrast was intended (*FS*, 6) and salutary. Examples of the numerous non-integrated multidisciplinary ones include: Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender, ed., *The Knowledge Explosion: Generations of Feminist Scholarship* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992); Sue Rosenberg Zalk and Janice Gordon-Kelter, ed., *Revolutions in Knowledge: Feminism in the Social Sciences* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992); Joyce McCarl Nielson, ed., *Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990); Winnie Tomm, ed., *The Impact of Feminist Approaches on Research Methodologies* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press for the Calgary Institute for the Humanities, 1989); Paula A. Treichler, Chris Kramarae, and Beth Stafford, ed., *For Alma Mater: Theory and Practice of Feminist Scholarship* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985); Elizabeth Langland and Walter Gove, ed., *A Feminist Perspective in the Academy: The Difference It Makes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[31] Myra Dinnerstein, review of *FS*, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 12 (Winter 1987): 402.

This weakness of *Feminist Scholarship* leads me to the *Reader*'s strength. A true collection, the 27 essays organised under ten topical introductions differ markedly amongst themselves and from the academy. The audience here is white feminist academics introducing Women's Studies to undergraduates. The editor, herself a member of this audience, believes that this audience requires at least five things: that their texts now include the critique of the women's movement from women of colour and radical feminists (e.g., Jackie Huggins, "Black Women and Women's Liberation"); that the value of moderate separatism be re-affirmed (e.g., Lowe and Benston, "The Uneasy Alliance"); that the traditional schools and interests within feminism (psychoanalysis plus Sandoval's "great hegemonic model") be addressed (e.g., Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, "Jacques Lacan"); that the critique of the disciplines be represented (e.g., Moira Gatens, "Feminism, Philosophy, and Riddles Without Answers"); and that an instructive history of academic feminism be constructed. Careful choice and scrupulous introductions ensure the preservation of this balancing act. The form also allows feminism's difference from itself to emerge and adumbrates the crisis of second wave feminism and the troubled emergence of the third wave (including the crucially important insistence upon defining racism as a women's/feminist issue).

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[32] Helena Michie places this move as "strategies to control Otherness, either by its displacement or removal from the speaking subject--the female structuring 'I'--or by the incorporation of the other into the family, into sameness." Helena Michie, "Not One of the Family: The Repression of the Other Woman in Feminist Theory" [1989], in *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 60. A rare hint of disagreement or transgression may be detected in the Preface where the authors discuss the process of collective composition (*FS*, viii), and on *FS*, 133, where they mention contrasting "liberal" and "radical" approaches.

Its achievement notwithstanding, *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* has serious weaknesses which arise from its form/audience. As I mentioned above, the audience here is white and first-world feminists. For example, the two essays by women of colour at the beginning of the book are aimed at white women. And no representation of third world feminism, in the U.S. or elsewhere, is offered. Second, what counts as "knowledge" here is the expository essay coming out the academy. Third, class analysis and neo-colonialism are avoided in the interest of a reactionary critique of the 1970s male Marxist establishment. Fourth, in trying to be all things to all teachers, the book focuses primarily on issues and disciplines that were fore-grounded in the early 1980s (e.g., psychoanalysis). And most of the voices heard on these issues or selected here are privileged and speaking from the academy. These last characteristics are pursued in the (commercial and pedagogical) interest of presenting "major" texts and the high history of academic feminism. Nevertheless, such diversity as is to be found here, much of it seriously confrontational in terms of the academy, is a welcome sign after the persuasive homogeneity of *Feminist Scholarship*.

(c) Place and publisher: *Feminist Scholarship* bears the imprint of a prestigious university press in the United States, the University of Illinois. The mark still ensures almost automatic entrée into nearly every university library in the English-speaking world. It means it will cross the desks of many review editors.[33] Lesley Johnson notes this aspect of the book's political significance, calling it "an eminently respectable academic text," its scholarly image ensured by its presentation "in solid hardback by a university publisher."[34] In addition, the concerns of the North

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[33] Indeed, *FS* was reviewed by major journals in Philosophy, Religious Studies, Education (several sub-fields), and Women's Studies.

[34] *Educational Studies* 17 (Fall 1986): 462. In my view, Johnson's is the most discerning review of *FS*.

American university are at the centre, including institutional concerns such as the peculiarly American relationship between the disciplines and the institutional position of U.S. academics, and philosophical positions such as empiricist approaches to society and consciousness.[35]

Discussing the place and publisher of *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* raises an entirely different set of issues. The eleven contributing editors work and teach in Australia. The text, according to the blurb, is based on materials compiled for a course at Deakin University, Victoria. Australian academic feminists wrote many of the essays, and Australian concerns are central. That this volume is published by a commercial house in London and New York which has an interest in marketing it indifferently to British, American, and Australian (university) book stores is not without ethico-political significance. For example, the first section, "Critique and Construct" consists of three essays on race and class. The first is the Jackie Huggins essay mentioned above, "Black Women and Women's Liberation." Though the essay is about the position of Aboriginal women in Australia, the piece invites an uncritical analogy with the position of African-American women in North American and the UK. Discussions of Australian aboriginal women in the first two essays (Huggins' and also Diane Bells' "Aboriginal Women, Separate Spaces, and Feminism") may invite an uncritical analogy with the position of native women in Canada. Or it may serve as an alibi for avoiding the discussion of native women's pressing issues in Canadian Women's Studies classrooms.[36]

(d) Date: Both books reveal the importance of understanding their particular moment of the history into which they fit. *Feminist Scholarship* bears a publication date of 1985, but this is seriously misleading. As the authors discuss in the introduction, the process of collaboratively writing and revising the book took more than five years. This means that its presentation is based on research published up to about 1980. In the rapidly evolving world of feminist scholarship, this lag ensured that the book was dated before it was off the presses. The book even omits significant developments in feminist theory between 1980 and 1985, including significant recognitions of the critique of North American academic feminism by psychoanalytic and post-humanist feminists, lesbian activists, and American women of colour.[37]

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[35] Grumet, review of *FS*, 576-77.

[36] This book has, in fact, been used as a reader for the introductory Women's Studies course at the University of Alberta.

While *Feminist Scholarship* represents a cautious presentation of academic feminism in the 1960s and '70s, *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* is a book of the 1980s. Despite its 1991 publication date and the claim that "it will . . . appeal to anyone interested in recent developments in feminist theory" (*RFK*, i), the reprinted works span 1973-1987 with a median date of 1984. But already here the field is fraught to a much greater extent than is represented in *Feminist Scholarship*. It can usefully be placed in the history of academic feminism as a sign of the birth pains of a new level of engagement with auto-critique, of confrontation with the academy and disciplines, of post-structuralist theorising, and of considered solidarity with the other emancipatory struggles of our time.

* * *

So much for what is available on first glance. A brief comparison of the contents of these books suggests what may emerge from a deeper reading. For academic librarians, three of the most important aspects of introductory works on academic feminism are their history of that movement, their relationship(s) with the apparatus of academic knowledge production, and their political stance.

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[37] This general point is made by Marilyn R. Schuster in a review for the *Journal of Higher Education* 59 (January 1988): 96. A closer argument could be made by examining any one of the five disciplines. For example, the presentation of literary studies by Lillian Robinson roughly corresponds to the position articulated by Annette Kolodny in her famous "Dancing Through the Minefield" essay composed in 1978-79 and first published in 1980 (see Chapter 3 for full reference and discussion of Kolodny's essay). Robinson's characterisation of literary studies in *FS* is especially surprising considering Robinson's position within literary studies in the 1970s as a prominent radical critic. See her *Sex, Class, and Culture* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978). Apparently, the duality (inside/outside) that forms the main argument of *FS* determines her approach to the subject therein, where she conceives her radical work as outside the disciplines of literary studies *proper* (the subject in *FS*). The well-known article summarising her position during the period of *FS*'s composition is "Treason Our Text: Feminist Challenges to the Literary Canon," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 2 (Spring 1983): 83-98; for a searching discussion of the issues raised during the writing of *FS*, see Lillian Robinson, "Feminist Criticism: How Do We Know When We've Won?" *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 3 (Spring/Fall 1984): 143-51.

The history of academic feminism to be found in *Feminist Scholarship* is a continuist and progressive account of the emergence and growth of feminist work in Women's Studies and in cleansing the disciplines, even while this work is being resisted by the academy. The authors develop this narrative by asserting that "the first task that faced feminist scholars was the identification of pervasive male bias that was discovered to be deeply imbedded in the disciplines, and indeed this still stands as one of their most significant accomplishments" (*FS*, 15). This achievement set the stage for a "salutary critical examination of the fundamental assumptions of traditional scholarship [which] has prepared the way for studies that yield a fresh, even revelatory understanding of women's being" (*FS*, 36-37). From this critical enterprise arose disciplinary and interdisciplinary work on the oppression, agency, and liberation of women. In the final chapter, the authors leave academic feminists banging on the gates of the leading disciplinary journals and beginning to "infiltrate the disciplines" (*FS*, 181).

The documentation printed in *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* challenges this history. Sneja Gunew constructs a much more complicated and painful story. The earliest texts in the collection show a radical feminism of the 1970s, including writings by Mary Daly, Hélène Cixous, Anne Koedt, and a member of the Furies group, lesbian separatist Charlotte Bunch. These women were writing about women's autonomy, women's writing, and women's politics, and they were defiant in the face of the academy, speaking within it and mostly outside of it and calling the boundaries of these two spaces into serious question. The knowledge they produced at that time was nearly invisible in the disciplines. During the early 1980s, the story takes a turn toward the academy with the emergence of the "uneasy alliance." Disciplinary critiques (philosophy, science, religious studies) and new fields of study of particular interest for women (e.g., psychoanalysis and women's subjectivity) emerge. Connections with the academic Left, including Marxist feminism, are made and broken. In contrast to *Feminist Scholarship*, progress is uncertain and constantly questioned, while discussion and disagreement between feminists remains vigorous.

For example, the two essays under the rubric "Feminism and Subjectivity," Moira Gatens questions the sex/gender distinction upon which much feminist theorising is based, while Teresa Brennen presents a history of psychoanalytic feminism (beginning with Mitchell's 1974 work) which ends not in un-problematic accomplishment but at a hopefully productive "impasse." Finally, in texts of the mid- to late-1980s such as hooks's, the explicit discussion of the full range of differences between women, that is, structural differences beyond academic differences of opinion, especially racial and ethnic difference, enter academic feminism as a powerful divisive and creative force. Clearly, then, this is a history with (a) difference. As the preface to the *Reader* states, this is a history of "the 'minority' feminist viewpoints" (*RFK*, i). But one could go further. While the *Reader* presents a history of academic *feminism* which is self-aware concerning its political and historical position, *Feminist Scholarship* presents a history of feminist *academicism* with an eye to gaining access to the history of the disciplines.

I believe the reasons for these different histories follow from the authors' differing conceptions of the relationship between feminism and academic knowledge production. In her recent essay review of books on the organization and production of academic knowledge, Ellen Messer-Davidow makes this difference manifest as the distinctions among innovation, integration, and transformation, or between *knowledge changing* (dynamic growth) and *changing knowledge* (epistemological disjuncture).[38] *Innovation* means "advancing" or "adding something new to a disciplinary patrimony"; *integration* means "restructuring portions of two or more patrimonies." *Transformation*, on the other hand, means "changing the forms as well as the contents of disciplinary patrimonies," "changing the production of academic knowledges and the reproduction of knowers," and fore-grounding "the agency of knowers." Innovation and integration take place at the level of knowledge production, while transformation depends upon new theories of knowledge itself (the epistemic level). Messer-Davidow argues that academic feminists' "critiques of the disciplines have been critiques mainly of their knowledges, as if these knowledges were distinct 'intellectual cores', to use the philosophy of science phrase" (695-86). She concludes: "We . . . need to write 'another book'--one about the social practices (e.g., discipline and normalization) and institutions that are productive of knowledge/power--that shows how action and thought, social structures and agents, interact in knowledge-production" (686).

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[38] *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 17 (Spring 1992): 684-85. Incidentally, Messer-Davidow unknowingly confronts librarianship with a concise, blistering indictment: "We do not yet have a hybrid field that investigates the organization and production of knowledge (and not just academic knowledge)" (688). Academic librarianship's failure to take knowledge production and use as its object gives rise in part to the problems which I attempt to disclose throughout this thesis; this failure is a key reason for my own pessimism concerning the future of librarianship. Messer-Davidow herself has taken steps to address this lack--see chap. 5, n. 19 below.

For all their talk of "radical restructuring" and challenging "fundamental assumptions," the authors of *Feminist Scholarship* continually underestimate the forces arrayed against them and the radicalism of the new scholarship by, for, and about women. They begin with a rather too simplistic notion of the disciplines. Disciplines are characterised primarily by their methods, which yield research that "may be both disparate and incommensurable." That is, they "afford different ways of knowing" (*FS*, 201) and, hence, different ways of knowing women. The problem they find with the disciplines is not that they are "nefarious boundary builders" (*FS*, 201), but rather that they have an implicit, imbedded "male bias" at their various roots, that is, their methods, assumptions, and conceptual structures. The authors call this problem "male-biased disciplinary frameworks" and "archaic interpretive frameworks" (181, 189). The task vis-à-vis the disciplines becomes, then, to work within them to restructure them so that research on women becomes visible (integration).

Because of their often incommensurable approaches, the disciplines are inadequate to the study of women in its totality. Thus, the authors propose a division of labour in the academy, where the disciplines are cleansed from within and "analytic concepts" without homes (e.g., gender equality, oppression, liberation) find themselves in a Women's Studies which undertakes the "integration" of disciplinary perspectives and where feminist scholarship is "synthesized and meshed with basic analytic concepts and feminist debates" (*FS*, 202, 197). This *duality,* the main argument of *Feminist Scholarship*, is evinced both in institutional arrangements and in the work of individual scholars.

In Chapter 5 of *Feminist Scholarship*, the authors play out their story through a survey of leading disciplinary journals. Their findings may be summarised as follows: Male-biased disciplinary frameworks are entrenched, the feminist infiltration of the disciplines has begun, and disciplines present different levels of *receptiveness* to change. Research on women is often *relevant* but ignored. Here the problems with this narrative become clear. First, the authors barely mention the institutional and epistemological imperatives that lead to the division of labour between the disciplines and Women's Studies (or other hybrid fields), between disciplinary inquiry and synthesis, nor even between the disciplines and politics. A fuller characterisation of the disciplines, including their institutional mechanisms and epistemic consensus, would have led to radically different conclusions concerning the position of feminist scholarship and the status of the disciplines. Second and relatedly, the authors decline to analyze the arrangements which lead to the choice of the journals as the "leading" representatives of their disciplines and the exclusion of Women's Studies journals from their study. Rather, they reproduce these arrangements and the exclusions. Third, they are never seriously disposed to question their own desire for entry into these journals or the disciplinary legitimation machine itself. Ultimately, with their emphasis on bias, they underestimate the depth of the changes needed. The correction of bias requires only innovation and integration, not transformational, epistemic change. But the problem is precisely that *the question of the relevance of women as knowing agents is irrelevant to academic knowledge production as it is currently constituted*. In general, then, *Feminist Scholarship* suffers from a lack of attention to the socio-historical constitution of knowledge in academic production and a failure to contextualise it and render it problematic.

The relationship of feminism and academic knowledge production in *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* is somewhat different. Here feminist knowledge confronts the disciplines; very little of the disciplinary work that dominates *Feminist Scholarship* is to be found. Where it does appear, as in Moira Gatens trenchant 1986 essay, "Feminism, Philosophy, and Riddle Without Answers," it demands taking the disciplines themselves as objects of study, the question of which "are all put into crisis . . . by the presence of feminist discourses" (*RFK*, 193). Gatens goes on to outline exactly what this might mean for philosophy:

> By *self-consciously* demonstrating that any philosophical paradigm is *not* neutral, these feminists make themselves, both as philosophers and as women, *visible*. By making themselves visible, they in turn throw into question the legitimacy of claims and assumptions in philosophy that have been taken as axiomatic. In so far as this approach questions the very foundation and status of philosophy it also reveals the investments and concerns of philosophy. It does this by demonstrating not only *what* is excluded from a particular philosophy but also *why* it is crucial, for the very existence of that philosophy, to exclude it. (*RFK*, 193)

Gatens' emphasis on legitimacy and necessary exclusion suggests a radical engagement with the question of philosophical knowledge itself.

But the most telling evidence for the contributing editors' commitment to transformational work is that they present a "multisituated feminism," one that places academic and so-called non-academic knowledge side-by-side and thus calls the distinction and the counter-legitimacy claims which surround them into question.[39] It also places feminist work on at least equal footing with the disciplines, undermining the disciplines' claims to natural, privileged ways of knowing. In addition, there is also a real sense of confronting the way institutionalisation is reconstituting feminist knowledge. As I argued above, the sense of dis-ease with the academy, academic feminism, and even "mainstream" or institutionalised elements of feminism outside the academy pervades the entire book.

Unfortunately, as Messer-Davidow points out, these strengths undermine the book's confrontation with the academy by failing to adequately engage and present compelling alternatives to current institutional arrangements, or what she calls "postdisciplinary possibilities in knowledge-production." In addition, much of the work reprinted here tends toward total avoidance of the academy, which, in light of the academy's pervasive power in producing and reproducing cultural explanations, would surely be a mistake and an abrogation of responsibility. What is needed is hard, confrontational work, an avoidance of de-politicised specialisation, and a refusal of marginality.

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[39] Messer-Davidow, op. cit., 687.

By now the political stances of these two books should be apparent from their quite different relationships with academic knowledge production. *Feminist Scholarship* presents a pluralist alternative. Though this view is mediated somewhat by the expectation that feminist scholarship should permeate all areas of the academy (*FS*, 178), the rhetoric of persuasion (inside/outside; centre/margin) and the acceptance of the division of academic labour marks the location of pluralism. But this is acceptable to the authors (at least one of whom has expressed her opposition to pluralism in print[40]), because they seem to hold that politics as such exist only outside the academy: "Political ideas" were "imported into the academy from the feminist movement." These ideas, such as women's oppression and liberation, lend "intellectual coherence to feminist studies" and provide "women's studies with an additional way to bring together diverse scholarship into a unified endeavor" (*FS*, 199). In this narrative, the disciplines as such remain unsullied by politics. In this approach, the disciplines as places of pure inquiry are preserved even as politics are allowed to 'enter' the academy at its periphery.

A unitary political position of *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge* cannot be divined. Indeed, the multiplicity of political strategies seem to splinter in many directions without theme or solidarity. This appearance does, in fact, render the impasse in second wave feminism with some accuracy. However, just as *Feminist Scholarship* acts to shore up the narrative of feminism's academic legitimacy, so the *Reader* uses a certain kind of pluralism in the interest of shoring up what Sandoval calls "the great hegemonic model" and its mutations. Though it aims to show how any comfortable consensus within this model is now undermined, the holders of the model still function as the explicit addressees or background for the selection and organisation of the essays. Commentaries on socialist feminism, post-structuralist and psychoanalytic feminism, radical or cultural feminism, and so on, form the bulk of the work. Here the politics of the canon are operative again. In order to present *the* history and *major* texts to the *main* audience for introduction, definition, remembrance, and address, the radically divergent must be disciplined or excluded.

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[40] See Lillian S. Robinson, "Dwelling in Decencies: Radical Criticism and the Feminist Perspective," *College English* 32 (1971); reprinted as chap. 1 of *Sex, Class, and Culture*.

Reading Academic Librarianship Reading

I will conclude this chapter with a brief presentation of the reading current North American academic librarianship gives to these two introductions to academic feminism.

The reading begins and in many ways ends during the publication process with the Library of Congress's Cataloging-in-Publication (CIP) programme. The reading of the Library of Congress cataloguer and classifier produces a record of that reading which will become the reading, representation, and virtual body of the book for all academic librarians. This reading can be expressed only in the limited language-codes of the Library of Congress Classification (LCC) schedules and the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH).

The reading is then digitised for transmission through the system to all parts of the continent. The network through which the record is transmitted and those libraries and commercial institutions which underwrite it (e.g., the Library of Congress, the Online Computer Library Center, large research libraries, and the thousands of recipient libraries) is the Library System in North America, the apparatus for the production of virtual bodies. Its cumulative weight ensures the uncritical reproduction of business as usual and the inaudibility of dissent. Micro-scale modifications processed through the system represent the only possibility of change under dominant logic.

From the point of the view of the individual academic librarian, a book can take a number of paths through the publication and distribution apparatuses into the library.

It can come automatically by pre-arrangement with a jobber (determined by publisher, library collection development profile, budget limitations, and so on), or it can come to the attention of the librarian through the good graces of the commercial or academic review media. In each case, the book always receives substantially the same reading. In the latter case, it is possible that the review may provide a slightly fuller reading than the Library of Congress machine-readable record. But in neither case do the gross, subtle, or soul bodies of the book exist for the individual academic librarian.

This is due to the following process. When the (automatically- or intentionally-) ordered book comes to the library, non-professionalised library staff obtain the digitised record of the Library of Congress's reading and enter it into the local database. *This is the sole moment of substantial contact between the library and the book.* The gross body of the book then receives the marks of processing and is stored. From this moment on, the book will exist only in its virtual form for the librarians, unless by some accident our individual librarian should happen upon its gross body.

Now this process cannot be entirely dismissed. Although local inattention to the soul of the book may be indefensible and hopelessly compromise the practice of academic librarianship, the construction and sharing of the virtual body make available astounding efficiencies of processing. And, as I mentioned above, the virtual body theoretically contains the potential for representing critical, multiply-informed, historical, and relational readings. So what kinds of readings are to be found in the Library of Congress records?

The Library of Congress's reading of *Feminist Scholarship* produced the following machine-readable record, shown here first in its primary transmission format[41]:

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00787pam  2200229 a 45000010013000000005001700013008004100030020002800071039001800099043001200117050002400129082002100153245
0098001742600052002723000024003245040031003485000020003796500036003996500045004356500045004807000032005 25^^   84002589 ^^
19860106000000.0^^840404s1985    ilu     b   s00100 eng    ^^ ^_a 0252009576 (alk. paper)^^0 ^_a2^_b3^_c3^_d3^_e3^^    ^_an-us---^^0
^_aHQ1181.U5^_bF46 1985^^0 ^_a305.4 /07/073^_21  9^^00^_aFeminist scholarship :^_bkindling in the groves of academe /^_cEllen Carol
DuBois ... [et al.].^^0 ^_aUrbana :  ^_bUniversity of Illinois Press,^_cc1985.^^  ^_ax, 227 p. ;  ^_c24 cm.^^ ^_aBibliography: p. 203-[220]^^
^_a Includes index.^^ 0^_aWomen's studies^_zUnited States.^^0^_a Interdisciplinary approach to knowledge.^^ 0^_a Interdisciplinary approach
in education.^^10^_aDuBois, Ellen Carol,^_d1947-^^^]
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[41] The MARC records for each of my examples are taken without alteration from CDMARC Bibliographic, version 07/91.

Mediated by the appropriate template software, the record is represented as follows:

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Leader   *****pam__22*****_a_4500
001        84002589
005      19860106000000.0
008      840404s1985____ilu______b___s00100_eng__
020 __  $a 0252009576 (alk. paper)
039 0_  $a 2 $b 3 $c 3 $d 3 $e 3
043 __  $a n-us---
050 0_  $a HQ1181.U5 $b F46 1985
082 0_  $a 305.4/07/073 $2 19
245 00  $a Feminist scholarship : $b kindling in the groves of academe / $c Ellen Carol DuBois ... [et al.].
260 0_  $a Urbana : $b University of Illinois Press, $c c1985.
300 __  $a x, 227 p. ; $c 24 cm.
504 __  $a Bibliography: p. 203-[220]
500 __  $a Includes index.
650 _0  $a Women's studies $z United States.
650 _0  $a Interdisciplinary approach to knowledge.
650 _0  $a Interdisciplinary approach in education.
700 10  $a DuBois, Ellen Carol, $d 1947-
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Academic library users and academic librarians usually see the virtual body represented by their multi-million dollar information retrieval systems something like what follows:

MATERIAL: Book
CALL NUMBER: HQ 1181 U5 F34 1985
TITLE: Feminist scholarship : kindling in the groves of
    academe / Ellen Carol DuBois ... [et al.].
PUBLICATION: Urbana : University of Illinois Press, c1985.
DESCRIPTION: x, 227 p. : ill. ; 24 cm.
NOTES: Includes index.
NOTES: Bibliography: p. 203-[220].
SUBJECT: Women's studies--United States.
SUBJECT: Interdisciplinary approach to knowledge.
SUBJECT: Interdisciplinary approach in education.
ADDED ENTRY: DuBois, Ellen Carol, 1947-

The elements of this reading which are particularly important for this discussion are the Call Number (the LCC class mark) and the Subjects (LCSH), which together represent the substantial reading. As for the former, which designates where the book will be shelved, the book is read as a contribution to a subdivision of the discipline Sociology named "The Family. Marriage. Woman." The balance of the call number informs us that the Congressional reader interpreted the work specifically as a contribution to and of interest to those in search of Women's Studies.[42] The Subjects, which, with the title, represent the part of the record which can be indexed, searched, and recombined with current software, represent the book as a contribution to Women's Studies in the United States and the theory of interdisciplinarity. Women's Studies as a Subject falls below the broader term "Women--Study and teaching" in the LCSH pseudo-hierarchy and is used in place of "Feminist studies."[43] In short, the book is read as a contribution to U.S. Women's Studies and the study of interdisciplinarity.

Of course, to criticise the poverty of this reading is only too easy: its mono-thematic reductionism, its arbitrariness, its privileging of the institutional and disciplinary perspective and researcher, its occlusion of *any* critical contribution the work may make to disciplinary knowledge production, its inability to comprehend ethico-political and socio-historical interest and location, and its ignorance of the book's interest even for Women's Studies itself. But such criticisms fall short of their real object: that is, *the systems and structures which compel and sanction this ignorance--the apparatus for the production of contentless, commodified negative virtual bodies*. This apparatus appears unassailable in its collusion in the fetishisation and reification of the disciplinary production of patriarchal knowledge and in technological, instrumental rationality. Each negative virtual body, universally accepted in North American and Australian academic libraries, is one contribution to the reproduction of the apparatuses of domination, to the disappearance of books, and to the suppression of differentials, transformation, or their pre-conditions. One of the most important agents for the production of such differentials and such transformations is feminism.

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[42] The full pseudo-hierarchy in descending order is as follows: Social Sciences: Sociology / The Family. Marriage. Woman / Women. Feminism / Study and teaching. Women's Studies / United States / Title / Copyright date. Library of Congress, Processing Services, Subject Cataloging Division, *Classification Class H Subclasses HM-HX Social Sciences: Sociology*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1980), 21. This is the latest edition of Class H available to me at the time of writing.

[43] See Library of Congress, Collections Services, Office of Subject Cataloging Policy, *Library of Congress Subject Headings*, 13th ed. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1990), 4636.

The same may be said for the Congressional reading of *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, a book which exists to academic librarianship as follows:

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00683pam  2200229 a
45000010018000000050017000180080041000350200015000760200022000910400018001130430012001310500022001430820015001652450061 00
1802600044002413000025002855040051003106500021003616500014003826500025003967000032 00421^^    89010959
//r91^^19910416073725.2^^890823s1991   enk     b    0010  0 eng  ^^  ^_a041504698X^^ ^_a0415046998(pbk.)^^  ^_aDLC^_c
DLC^_dDLC^^  ^_au-at---^^00^_aHQ1190^_b.R431990^^00^_a305.42  ^_220^^02^_aA Reader in feminist knowledge /^_cedited by Sne  ja
Gunew.^^0 ^_aLondon ;^_aNew York :^_bRoutledge,^_c1991.^^ ^_axi, 414 p. ;^_c25 cm.^^  ^_aIncludes bibliographical re  ferences and
index.^^ 0^_aFeminist theory.^^ 0^_aFeminism.^^   0^_aFeminism^_zAustralia.^^10^_aGunew, Sneja Marina,^_d1946  -^^^]
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Leader   *****pam__22*****_a_4500
001        89010959 //r91
005      19910416073725.2
008      890823s1991____enk______b____00100_eng__
020  __  $a 041504698X
020  __  $a 0415046998 (pbk.)
040  __  $a DLC $c DLC $d DLC
043  __  $a u-at---
050  00  $a HQ1190 $b .R43 1990
082  00  $a 305.42 $2 20
245  02  $a A Reader in feminist knowledge / $c edited by Sneja Gunew.
260  0_  $a London ; $a New York : $b Routledge, $c 1991.
300  __  $a xi, 414 p. ; $c 25 cm.
504  __  $a Includes bibliographical references and index.
650  _0  $a Feminist theory.
650  _0  $a Feminism.
650  _0  $a Feminism $z Australia.
700  10  $a Gunew, Sneja Marina, $d 1946-
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MATERIAL: Book
CALL NUMBER: HQ 1154 R286 1991
TITLE: A Reader in feminist knowledge / edited by Sneja
       Gunew
PUBLICATION: London ; New York : Routledge, 1991.
DESCRIPTION: xi, 414 p. ; 24 cm.
NOTES: Includes bibliographical references.
SUBJECT: Feminism.
ADDED ENTRY: Gunew, Sneja Marina, 1946-
```

The first things one notices here are the discrepancies between these two readings. The latter, taken from the catalogue of a large Canadian research library, represents the original reading given the book by the Library of Congress (CIP). The specific reading places the book as a contribution to the nineteenth and twentieth century history of the emancipation of women.[44] The manipulable element

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[44] The full pseudo-hierarchy in descending order is: Social Sciences: Sociology / The Family. Marriage.

(excepting the title), the Subject, is merely "Feminism." But the Library of Congress revised this record around the time of the *Reader*'s publication. That this re-reading did not make it into the catalogue of the research library is symptomatic of the System in question. Re-classification, however ethically, socially, and intellectually responsible, is an expense which is not justified by the purely technical and administrative functions of the record of reading, the virtual body. In any event, the new reading is slightly fuller: the class mark now places the book in the new category "Feminist theory" and adds the subjects "Feminist theory" (also new) and "Feminism--Australia." While this reading appears at first glance to serve the book and its potential audiences better (especially in the geographic subdivision of the third subject), it is, if anything, worse than that of *Feminist Scholarship*. I will mention only two of the most significant violences done by this reading: first, of the 43 women who added their voices, their wildly heterogeneous and conflictual contributions and perspectives, to the history of feminism and this rich collection, the record gags all but one; and second, after thirty years of second wave feminism, all the Library System has to show for it is an indifferent historical narrative summarily covering two centuries, a generic recognition of the institution of Women's Studies submerged by the discipline of Sociology, and a container called Feminism unendowed with thought, debate, or difference. This is a construction of non-use, never mind use-for-difference. It is a contribution to the suppression of disjuncture.[45] Once again, what and who compels, sanctions, and benefits from these practices?

The preceding discussions and summaries, while far from exhaustive, begin to give a sense of the challenge of reading academic feminism. It may appear daunting. Many academic librarians, their practice alienated from books to begin with, shrink back in fear before the task. On the other hand, it is impossible to ignore. Beyond the

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Woman / Women. Feminism / History / Modern / 19th-20th centuries. Emancipation of women / Title / Publication date. LCC, *HM-HX*, 21.

[45] See Dorothy E. Smith, "Textual Realities, Ruling, and the Suppression of Disjuncture," chap. in *The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 95-97.

ethico-political responsibility and the potential solidarity of a feminised profession (academic librarianship) within wider feminism, feminist scholarship finds itself increasingly a part of the constitutive forces of the academic knowledge production which shapes the academic library. Even where it is ignored or defined as other, woman's very absence often indicates a lack, an ignorance and occlusion which signifies feminism, woman. That is, whenever woman is silenced, the silencer invests and inherits a certain amount of his meaning in the reproduction of patriarchy. This is nothing new; only it is time to call it what it is. By constantly re-reading feminism, academic feminist librarians begin to uncover the ways they subsidise the status quo and their possible roles in bringing the visions of a powerful, transformational feminist third wave to fruition.

CHAPTER III

READING FEMINIST LITERARY STUDIES

> In the interest of the impossible (non)story, without end, a (non)representative feminist criticism cannot permit itself to represent itself as "itself." It tells a tale which cannot be fully summarized because its narrative capacity is far from exhausted. It is a (non)representative feminism that takes on the legislative role within its own ranks in order to give it away, to disperse its interest in being represented. In fact, by so dispersing the narrating (representative) function, it makes more narrative, more speaking about it. More feminism.
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> --Alice Parker & Elizabeth Meese, "Critical Negotiations"

I have chosen to discuss digressively some of the work of two academic feminists who identify themselves with literary studies. Their work will provide points of departure from which useful illustrations and arguments can be elaborated about academic feminism, its predicament, demands, and difficulties, and, later, about the responsibility of feminist academic librarianship. Before I begin, a reminder is in order: feminist literary studies are wildly diverse, divided, and expanding daily in every conceivable direction and interest. Their most critical accomplishments and significance cannot be contained 'within the discipline'. Furthermore, no chapter, no book, no library can represent it, contain it. Least of all this one.

The purpose of the chapter is twofold: to pursue work in the idea plane[1] (for a feminist theory of library classification) and thereby to build theoretical resources for a feminist theory of the North American bibliographic apparatus through an immanent critique of feminist librarianship. The pressing need for this project was, in part, the argument of chapter 2. The first aspect of the task is somewhat problematic in the sense that traditional work in the idea plane confines itself to the analysis of discourse for the identification of subjects, category-concept relations, and their sequences (*PLC*, parts E, M, and R). Ranganthan allows no role for the analysis of discourse in classification theory proper. He acknowledges that the classificationist must be versed in the current theory or theories of knowledge as the fundamental basis for the pursuit of "abstract classification" (*PLC*, XG).[2] However, philosophers of science, epistemologists, and sociologists of knowledge rely upon precisely this kind of discourse analysis for their production. The classificationist cannot afford to canonise the academic division of labour as Ranganathan has it here, but rather must take a broad and active, co-operative position. This guards not only against the narrow, conserving reproduction of prevailing theories of knowledge (a trap into which Ranganathan falls), but also ensures that the work of the classificationist builds from a critical reading of knowledge production and its relations.[3]

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[1] For an introduction to the three planes of work vocabulary, see *PLC*, Part M.

Narration 4: Dancing

Annette Kolodny's essay, "Dancing Through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice, and Politics of a Feminist Literary Criticism" (1978) is probably the best known essay in the history of feminist literary criticism. It won the 1979 Florence Howe Essay Contest of the Women's Caucus of the Modern Language Association and was made the lead article of the 1980 volume of *Feminist Studies*.[4] It has since been anthologised numerous times and heavily discussed.

In 1980, Kolodny was as close as anybody would come to being the recognised voice of feminist criticism in the academy--a star. In addition to "Dancing," she had published two widely-read essays which were important in setting the stage for feminist criticism in North American universities.[5] Though her voice would fade from this prominence as the field widened and fractured and its practises proliferated, Kolodny captured and skilfully presented crucial features of the feminist literary criticism of the late 1960s and the 1970s, features which comprised the pre-conditions for many of today's variegated practices.

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[2] See Figure 1, p. 125, for the significance of discourse analysis in traditional AST. See also A. Neelameghan, *Classificationist and the Study of the Structure and Development of the Universe of Subjects*, FID/CR Report, no. 5 (Copenhagen: Danish Centre for Documentation, 1976).

[3] See also below chap. 4, Figure 1 and n. 5; chap. 5, sub verbo "Theoretical Pillars of AST."

[4] *Feminist Studies* 6 (Spring 1980): 1-25. Page references given in the text are to the reprint in *Feminisms*, ed. Warhol and Price Herndl, 97-116. Hereafter cited in the text as *DTM*.

[5] "Some Notes on Defining a Feminist Literary Criticism," *Critical Inquiry* 2 (Autumn 1975): 75-92; for

The essay under discussion can be useful for academic librarians if it is read critically. Ongoing feminist critical practice requires the active support of academic librarians. But this support is not and cannot be forthcoming under many current library practices. It is in the practical and theoretical changes it requires of academic librarians that feminist criticism becomes relevant for an academic feminist librarianship. Equally important are the deficiencies in Kolodny's essay, which has been severely criticised. Academic librarians can learn even more from an informed reading of Kolodny's critics, because in crucial ways, this debate reveals the emergence of the critique which leads to the call for a third wave, while at the same time enabling an analysis of academic feminists' knowledge productions. Such a reading also makes clear that academic librarians cannot afford to rely on the book as such, never mind its virtual body alone, but must also attend critically to its constitutive relations--past, present, and future.

Kolodny's essay may be discussed in three parts. In the first, she attempted briefly to summarise the work in five projects of the 1970s which fell under the "wide umbrella" of feminist literary criticism (98-101). Of the five, the one of most direct interest to librarians is the one in which Kolodny saw the most spectacular successes, that is, in "the return to circulation of previously lost or otherwise ignored works by women writers" (98).[6] This meant a return to critical discussion for these works, as well as to classroom and commercial circulation, accomplished through archival work, reprinting, preparation of critical editions, and anthologising. This bibliographic archaeology has come to be associated with what Elaine Showalter named

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the genteel discussion which followed, see *Critical Inquiry* 2 (Summer 1976): 807-32; "A Map for Rereading: Or, Gender and the Interpretation of Literary Texts," *New Literary History* 11 (1980): 451-67.

[6] For a more recent discussion of this project, see Mary Eagleton, *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), chap. 1.

"gynocriticism."[7] Gynocritics were interested in the construction and study of women's literary traditions, and they put women's writing at the centre of feminist literary studies. Their ultimate goal was to understand women's writings in terms of the distinct, gendered contexts, concerns, and emphases of women's lives, terms unavailable within the historical and aesthetic contours of the male-dominated canon. Showalter sums up the accomplishments of gynocriticism: a "vast critical literature on individual women writers, persuasive studies of the female literary tradition from the Middle Ages to the present in virtually every national literature, and important books on what is called 'gender and genre': the significance of gender in shaping generic conventions."[8]

A significant, potentially devastating flaw in the major works of the original gynocritics, following, among others, Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* (1977) and Ellen Moers's *Literary Women: The Great Writers* (1976), was their exclusive focus on upper class white writers, primarily of the nineteenth century. The failure to include women of colour and the writing and reading contexts of working-class women into the categories "women" and "tradition," together with the temporal and geographical limitations, reproduced the double/triple oppressions, ignored differences between women, and rendered the historical and theoretical propositions tenuous. More recent feminist critics such as Barbara Christian and Catharine Stimpson have extended gynocritical, archaeological work to the traditions of black women and lesbians.[9]

Gynocritics have also been criticised for, among other things, the canon-effects of their work, a criticism which can be understood through a discussion of two of the impressive products of feminist bibliographic archaeology and the construction of a women's literary tradition: *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* and *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English.*[10] The former, which attempts to represent "the exuberant variety yet strong continuity of the literature that English-speaking women have produced between the fourteenth century and the present" has nevertheless received an ambivalent reception from feminist critics. While Gilbert and Gubar asserted "that the texts we have included in *NALW* will, at the very least, suggest the contours of the canon into which readers will be able to assimilate the works of many other women authors,"[11] this effort to establish a counter-canon of women's writing not only begs questions about exclusion and identity, but also about the category 'Literature': value, desire, reception and audience, form, and conditions of production and distribution.[12] Susan Sage Heinzelman takes Gilbert and Gubar to task for not only suppressing "the very weirdness that has called this anthology into being in the first place," but also giving more power to the traditional canon by reproducing the existing "pedagogical narrative and its production values" of the traditional canonical anthology form.[13] Feminist critics have been among those most concerned with these and the more general problems of the canon as well as the specific problems of alternative canon formations (I will return to their arguments below).

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[7] Showalter has recently characterised gynocriticism as follows: "[It] has focused on the multiple signifying systems of female literary traditions and intertextualities, . . . challenged and revised the prevailing [adversarial] styles of critical discourse, and asked whether theories of female creativity could be developed instead from within the female literary tradition itself." Elaine Showalter, "A Criticism of Our Own: Autonomy and Assimilation in Afro-American and Feminist Literary Theory," in *Feminisms*, ed. Warhol and Price Herndl, 181.

[8] Showalter, "A Criticism of Our Own," 181.

[9] For example, see Barbara Christian, *Black Women Novelists: The Development of a Tradition, 1892-1976* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980); and Catharine R. Stimpson, "Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English" [1981], chap. in *Where the Meanings Are*, 97-110.

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[10] Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, ed., *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* (New York: Norton, 1985); Virginia Blain, Isobel Grundy, and Patricia Clements, ed., *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English: Women Writers from the Middle Ages to the Present* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 1990).

[11] Gilbert and Gubar, *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*, xxx.

[12] In a well known review of the *Norton Anthology*, Lillian Robinson asked "whether or not literature by women is *ready* for the designation of its canon and, if a premature (and, to some, never acceptable) attempt is to be made, on what basis the contents are to be selected." Lillian Robinson, "Is There a Class in This Text?" *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 5 (Fall 1986): 299.

[13] Susan Sage Heinzelman, "Hard Cases, Easy Cases and Weird Cases: Canon Formation in Law and Literature," *Mosaic* 21, no. 2 (Spring 1988): 65. This is what Robinson calls "Nortonization" in "Is There a Class in This Text?" 297.

The Feminist Companion avoids the problems of the "Nortonization" of women's writing while showing the potential of the project to recover women's writing to an even greater extent. The 1200 pages of this spell-binding work of biographical, historical, and critical scholarship contain entries for over 2700 women writing in English, the books only explicit limitation. Its size and scope and the previously hidden information it reveals wreak havoc with any attempt to erect a canon, alternative or otherwise, by making painfully visible the violence of any choice and the impossibility of an adequate classificatory or theoretical schema. Although several inexplicable exclusions have been identified, included are women of several national traditions, women of all races, classes, and sexual practices, women resisting dominant gender, race, and class ideologies, and women writing in all forms. While confirming the gynocritical propositions that the contexts of women's literary production have been consequentially and verifiably different than those of men, the editors also put an end to any hopes of discovering a single women's tradition. The book reveals an almost inexhaustible variety of conditions, motivations, audiences, and *Lebenswege*. So where Gilbert and Gubar decline to address the problematic canon-effects of their work, the editors of *The Feminist Companion* openly discuss theirs: "coverage of major figures is comparatively summary. We have preferred to direct generosity towards finding or making space for the lesser-known. In casting our net widely, we hope to defer rather than to assist the gradual emergence of a canon of writing by women."[14]

Taken together, *The Norton Anthology* and *The Feminist Companion* represent significant achievements of academic feminists which alter and undermine received knowledge about literature in English in profound and as-yet unrealised ways. Gynocritical archaeological work successfully documents and partially rescues submerged historical narratives. Its re-emergence casts a harsh glare upon the terrible work, the epistemic violence, of canon-formation, of the writing of history, of the production of (literary) value, and of the university and the library it (re)produces. In addition, gynocritical work operates an intervention into the everyday sexual politics of pedagogy and cultural (re)production. It both provides resources for interrupting this production process and helps to build a space where gendered social relations become visible, where gendered identities and histories can thus be contested, and most importantly, where the creative and critical agencies of women invades and overhauls ethico-political practice and consciousness.

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[14] Blain, Clements, and Grundy, *The Feminist Companion*, ix.

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In the second and central part of her essay, Kolodny explicated what she took to be "the truly radicalizing premises" at the heart of feminist accomplishments in literary studies (*DTM*, 102). The three, now well-known, interrelated premises deal with what Kolodny argued were the central issues in the debate over the literary canon: history, reading, and value.[15] A great deal of feminist literary study has explored the gender relations of power and dominance constructed, expressed in, and reproduced by the patriarchal literary canon as measure and institution. Feminist literary critics have intervened in the debates surrounding all three of the interrelated concepts. They, along with African-American critics and others, have argued that *social change depends in part on revolutionising the canonical histories, reading strategies, and narratives of value which have dominated twentieth-century literary studies*. This purpose represents not so much a new public spiritedness or politicisation of literary studies; indeed, the body politic has been (often implicitly) central to literary discourse for several hundred years. Instead, it represents the emergence of a new, progressive political *self-consciousness*. In the next few pages, I will briefly outline Kolodny's position and some subsequent work in this instructive area of literary studies.

First, concerning history, Kolodny argues: "Literary history (and, with that, the historicity of literature) is a fiction," a social *construct*, which is daily reproduced as it is reread (*DTM*, 103-104). Feminists recognise the literary inheritance as "a resource for remodeling our literary history, past, present, and future" (104).[16] Thus, the study of canonical literary history is, in part, the study of the institutions which construct and underwrite it and which, in turn, rely on it for their own justification. These include, in the case under discussion, the North American academy and the profession of English literary studies and its literary canon. During the 1980s, Paul Lauter published several well-received essays on the formation of the historical canon in American literary studies. These studies are animated by the perspectives of feminism, working-class activism, African-Americans' struggles and achievements, educational and social reform, and the ethos of social democracy. The culmination of Lauter's work in this area is his editorship of the ground-breaking *Heath Anthology of American Literature*.[17]

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[15] For what is generally considered to be the indispensable introduction to 'canon theory' in the literary and other disciplines, see Robert von Hallberg, ed., *Critical Inquiry* 10 (September 1983); later published as *Canons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); in feminist literary studies specifically, one may begin with part 3 "Canon" of *Feminisms*, ed. Warhol and Price Herndl; for a Canadian introduction, see Robert Lecker, ed., *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

Lauter defines the American literary canon in practical, historical terms as "that set of authors and works generally included in basic American literature college courses and textbooks, and those ordinarily discussed in standard volumes of literary history, bibliography, or criticism."[18] Ultimately, the selection is based on and encodes certain norms and values which, "by virtue of its cultural standing, it helps endow with force and continuity. . . . The literary canon is, in short, a means by which culture validates social power" (19). Whose history and whose power? To get at the answer to this question, Lauter explores the history of literary history in the first half of the twentieth century and finds a drastic constriction of the literary canon at the expense of all women and of African-American men. He accounts for this development by sketching the emergence of modern literary studies, in particular "the professionalization of the teaching of literature [which included the development of gender and colour lines in the profession], the development of an aesthetic theory [namely formalism] that privileged certain texts, and the historiographic organization of the body of literature into conventional 'periods' and 'themes'" (27), including in and by the heavily capitalised and marketed anthologies. These interrelated developments were carried out by and in the interest of 'the man of letters in the modern world':

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[16] For a working-out of this premise in terms of U.S. literary history, see Kolodny's "The Integrity of Memory: Creating a New Literary History of the United States," *American Literature* 57 (May 1985): 291-307.

[17] 2 vols. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1990); for an analysis of the *Heath* within an account of the canonical battles in the American-literature classroom and its anthology tradition, see Phillipa Kafka, "Another Round of Canon Fire: Feminist and Multi-Ethnic Theory in the American Literature Survey," *MELUS* 16, no. 2 (Summer 1989-1990): 31-49. The essays to which I refer and others are gathered together in Lauter's *Canons and Contexts*, Part I.

[18] Paul Lauter, "Race and Gender in the Shaping of the American Literary Canon: A Case Study from the Twenties," in *Feminist Criticism and Social Change*, ed. Newton and Rosenfelt, 19; this study first appeared in *Feminist Studies* 9 (Fall 1983).

> The arbiters of taste, scholars and critics alike, were . . . drawn from a narrow stratum of American society. Their experience seldom included the lives and work about which black writers, for example, wrote. . . . If people need not be dealt with physically, socially, seriously, their experiences are not likely to be seen as providing the basis for significant art [one could add, without changing contexts, significant scholarship]. The literary canon does not, after all, spring from the brow of the master critic; rather it is a social construct. (33)

In Lauter's terms, the literary histories produced during this period validated the social power of those men. Thus, Lauter's study of the making of literary histories leads him to argue that these historical narratives are products of certain socio-economic and institutional arrangements which they, in turn, reproduce. Altering the canon by working to include works by significant numbers of, for example, women and aboriginal people will lead to a revaluation of the meanings and significance of their concerns and a subsequent general re-working of the historical narrative and the narrative of the production of value. The founding condition is curricular change.[19]

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[19] See "Reconstructing American Literature: Curricular Issues," chap. in *Canons and Contexts*, 97-113. The *Heath Anthology* is the final production of the Lauter-directed Reconstructing American Literature curricular project (founded 1980). These concerns permeate all of Lauter's writings. At stake, he believes, is a concern that transcends the academy: "The question before us is who may inhabit the 'neighborhoods' called 'American literature', 'western civilization', or 'cultural literacy', how are the boundaries of these intellectual subdivisions of these intellectual subdivisions to be redrawn *not* to keep 'them' out but to reconstitute social and educational institutions . . . as truly equal" (*Canons and Contexts*, 169). Lauter is interested in the material and institutional history of literary studies precisely because he believes that making visible these mechanisms of canon-formation and writing literary history plays a crucial role in demystifying and altering them. Specifically, he has argued that a new kind of critical institution, "canonical criticism," will write new literary histories. This criticism, which librarians would do well to consider carefully in terms of their own practices, is considered at length in Paul Lauter, "The Two Criticisms: Structure, Lingo, and Power in the Discourse of Academic Humanists," in *Literature, Language, and Politics*, ed. Betty Jean Craige (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 1-19.

Lauter's project of revising and broadening the literary canon along the lines of race, gender, and class draws upon and is supported by the work of the gynocritics. In general, these critics have the same goal, that is, the construction of alternative canons. However, Lauter's canonical criticism goes well beyond the bibliographic archaeology and exclusive literary history of the gynocritics. In fact, he is not open to the criticism brought against the gynocritics that they fail to address the canon-effects of their work. Nor does he fail, as they do, to recognise fully the problematic nature of the modern category 'Literature' and the aestheticism which provides its modernist foundation. On the contrary, for Lauter, the selection of works for his alternative pedagogical canon is a historical, socio-political problem. But Lauter's commitment to intervention at the level of material history nonetheless compels him to suggest alternative selections and to publish them. This signals his assumption that one must not only question current values but also intervene historically and materially to produce new ones.

As momentous and indispensable as such interventions are, they become dangerous if they are conceived as final, exhaustive, universal, or natural identities. Other critics, prominently feminists, urge caution and vigilance in the construction alternative canons. Elizabeth Meese, for example, points out that a counter-canon, even one revised along lines of sex, race, and class, is fully as problematic as the original codification: the canonical notion of "literary history as an Identity with its constituent relationships, even the breaks, discontinuities, and dangers . . . find themselves subsumed under and glossed over in the project of rehistoricization."[20] Gayatri Spivak suggests that would-be canonizers answer crucial "counter-questions" such as this: "What subject-effects were systematically effaced and trained to efface themselves so that a canonic norm might emerge?"[21]

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[20] Elizabeth A. Meese, *(Ex)Tensions: Re-Figuring Feminist Criticism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 31.

[21] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value" [1985], chap. in *In Other Worlds*, 155. As suggestive as this question is, I do this important essay an injustice by quoting only this line from it. Anyone interested in the problem of value within the context of literary studies or more generally cannot ignore Spivak's "speculations" on the textuality of value. It, in fact, informs my own evaluation of the work of Herrnstein Smith (below, pp. 92-96).

Kolodny begins her exploration of the operation of value as follows: "Since the grounds upon which we assign aesthetic value to texts are never infallible, unchangeable, or universal, we must reexamine not only our aesthetics but, as well, the inherent biases and assumptions informing the critical methods which (in part) shape our aesthetic responses" (*DTM*, 107).[22] The feminist recognition and revelation of gender-power relations in received literary histories and interpretative paradigms denaturalizes literary value. Interrogating the production of value(s) is the decisive moment in deconstructing the canonical/non-canonical distinction.

Critics such as Meese and Spivak critique Kolodny's and Lauter's self-conscious rehistoricizations and take them to their theoretical conclusion by attempting to expose and transform the production of value itself as it operates (in) all canons. They go beyond the notion of opening the canon and attempt to address what Christine Froula has called the "canonical economy as such, the dynamics of cultural authority," the very "*idea* (and ideal) of 'the canon'."[23] For these critics, the (literary) history that represents and shores up oppressive explanations is based on the process of the production of (aesthetic) value, of differentials with socio-economic, psychosexual, racial, and political dimensions. In this aspect of their critique, they are interested not so much in what is selected and taught as in the narrative terms under which any selection, any dichotomy of inclusion/exclusion, is made to appear intelligible. In fact, they argue, *any* such dichotomy issues from the same logic as the original distinction.

The title chapter of Barbara Herrnstein Smith's 1988 *Contingencies of Value* is one of the most influential of recent essays on the (re)production aesthetic value.[24]

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[22] Kolodny herself does not go beyond this denaturalizing of literary value except to say that value arises from the "*contexts of judgment*" (108).

[23] Christine Froula, "When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy," in *Canons*, ed. von Hallberg, 151.

[24] *Contingencies of Value: Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 30-53. The chapter is a revised version of the last half of the essay which appeared as the lead article in the *Critical Inquiry* number cited in n. 14. Though Herrnstein Smith's analysis of value here has been influential among feminists, the more or less thoroughgoing relativism (and rejection of much feminism) of her 1988 book has received little attention, not to mention approbation, from feminists. A note on dual surnames is in order here: women with dual surnames are discussed and cited using both names.

The author emphatically rejects the notion of intrinsic value: "All value is radically contingent, being neither a fixed attribute, an inherent quality, or an objective property of things but, rather, an effect of multiple, continuously changing, and continuously interacting variables or, to put this another way, the product of the dynamics of a system, specifically an *economic* system" (30). Her variables attempt to capture this system of continuous interaction among: the (textual) object in question; the subject's "personal economy" ("psychophysiological structures, mechanisms, and tendences," "personal identity and history"); the subject's environment (including the mode of production and the evaluative communities which the evaluating subject inhabits or by which the subject is influenced); and the conditions under which the interactions take place ("social, cultural, institutional, and contextual variables from culturally-specific classifications to the circumstances of the encounter) (38). A relative convergence of the contents of these variables among the members of a particular community may give rise to canonical (seemingly natural, non-contigent) values and a canon of texts. Divergencies in the contents of the variables will lead to different values, valued texts, and interpretations, and, ultimately, divergent explanations for the culture in question. To meet the threats presented by difference, convergent communities rely upon evaluative authorities who privilege "*the particular contingencies that govern their preferences*" and discount or pathologise other contingencies (40-41).

The evaluative process, through which these contingences are played out, begins with authors and their putative audiences and continues down the chain of publication, review, purchase, classification, preservation, anthologising, discussion, teaching, display, citation, allusion, and imitation. In each of the many decisions and activities in this process, several individuals with varying degrees of influence, various purposes, and in various communities and institutional contexts encounter the work and evaluate it, "both reflecting and contributing to the various economies in relation to which a work acquires value. And each of the evaluative acts mentioned . . . represents a set of individual economic decisions" (46).

However, as primary authors or editors in the bibliography, they are alphabetised by last name.

Finally, Herrnstein Smith argues that endurance is no less contigent: an object will become valued when it performs "certain desired/able functions quite well for some set of subjects" under certain conditions and at certain times (47). Such an object is endowed with survival advantages because it will be reproduced many more times than non-valued ones, and the longer it survives, the more a text will become imbedded in the intertextuality of the particular community's culture. In this way, a canonical work takes on the power "not merely to *survive within* but to *shape and create* the culture in which its value is produced and transmitted" (50). Far from being evidence of the text's inherent value, survival marks the power of

> the cultural institutions through which it operates (schools, libraries, theaters, museums, publishing and printing houses, editorial boards . . .) [which] are, of course, all managed by *persons* [say, librarians] (who, by definition, are those with cultural power and commonly other forms of power as well); and, since the texts that are selected and preserved by "time" will always be those which "fit" (and, indeed, have often been *designed* to fit) *their* characteristic needs, interests, resources, and purposes, that testing mechanism has its own built-in partialities accumulated in and thus *intensified* by time. (51)

Thus, Herrnstein Smith argues that *those things which are usually taken to be the effects of a work's value (e.g., citation) are, in fact, its sources.*

Herrnstein Smith's quasi-materialist analysis of the production and reproduction of value reveals their diffuse, multiple, and interacting determinants and begins to break down the traditional distinctions between axiology and economics, amongst intrinsic, use, surplus, and exchange values. Appeals to the idea and ideal of a literary canon based on intrinsic, universal, and eternal values become impossible. Canons and their 'valued' texts are shown to be products of a complex of reciprocally-determined subject positions and environmental determinants, operated and reinforced by dominant communities and by the institutions they control. This conclusion serves to undermine not only traditional canons, but also any alternative canon which appeals to the intrinsic value of its selected texts and any other attempt to establish a new identical historical narrative or a history of identities under such categories as 'art' or 'literature' (e.g., the gynocritics' canon of women's writing).

On the other hand, by Herrnstein Smith's account, the gynocritical canon is just the expression of the conjunction of some women's personal preferences and their evaluative processes. She provides no clue to why some values and some valuing subjects and communities are less or more significant than others (except for the *endurance* of certain valued objects), a pre-condition that endows alternative selections with quite different ethico-political meanings. The production of value and, more importantly, the means to determine what counts as value in a particular economy, are among the most important forms of social and historical power. Without a recognition of this, the *ability* to produce a (social) differential is taken for granted and, thus, where and for whom the ability is suppressed, there is no community, no value, and no exit but the liberal pluralist one. What appears as limitless contingency is rather a failure to distinguish between the decisive and the trivial.

Furthermore, while Herrnstein Smith briefly acknowledges that the economic, linguistic, and gender systems construct (proper) need, the formula "desired/able functions" does not ask the question of the function of function within phallogocentric logic, of which her theory and all canons are a product. In fact, 'function' or 'use' here is *consumed* by this logic, the logic of explanation, mastery, conquest, appropriation, accumulation, circulation, and, above all, commodification; that is, the logic of the production (of value, knowledge, subjectivity, etc.) within First World patriarchal capitalism. As Elizabeth Meese says, "Use value is no pure, untainted alternative to either exchange or surplus value, but is instead, to some indeterminate degree, their product and effect. Use value bears the marks of our romantic, idealized forgetting, in a masquerade of 'naturalness'."[25] Herrnstein Smith seems to forget who she is, where the power comes from, and where and in what historical moment she lives. What she provides, then, is an account of the socio-economic and historical contingency of personal preferences, and what she cannot help providing is a descriptive account of the commodification of the literary text *under the sign of value as such.*[26]

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[25] Meese, *(Ex)Tensions*, 35. "It becomes necessary then, . . . to stipulate the proper use of use, the way in which feminist literary critics make texts useful to us in order to avoid the oppressive dimension of an inevitable reterritorialization, what we can say about others without appropriating (interpreting?) and canonizing them. In a certain sense everything is at stake in these representations and negotiations--our systems of meaning, identity politics, and theoretical investments" (36).

On the other hand, a move beyond this particular chain of value is somewhat difficult to conceptualise, locked into it as we all are (at the moment). Nevertheless, the deconstructivist Meese attempts to use the concept of usefulness as a lever with which to undermine not just the stability of canons and identities but to suggest "a process of selections which speaks of relationships between texts and readers that are never finished."[27] To this end, Meese articulates a strategic use of use under the current system:

> We could foreground in disagreements of this kind [over value, selection, judgement] what we variously, individually and collectively, expect a text to do for us, under what conditions, and who "we" are (or think "we" are) in order to judge it useful--a position in which we attempt to speak our own needs and desires as readers, and to articulate or at least to expose our subject positions. (34)

Whatever our desire to exit our world, we live within systems of institutions, authority and, thus, canons. Institutions secrete canons and require them for existence, operation, and justification. Thus, political work within the North American university means expanding the disciplinary canons upon which it is currently founded and to which it appeals. Citing a passage from *Capital* III, Gayatri Spivak says, "A model for emulation: a lot of gesture politics, talk of other worlds. But the reduction of the space and time spent on the old canon is the founding condition."[28]

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[26] In this light, it seems ironic that Herrnstein Smith looks to "artistic creation as a paradigm of evaluative activity" (44). Here, in Gayatri Spivak's words, "the whole notion of the creative imagination comes in as literature gets into the circuit of commodity production in the most brutal sense" (*PCC*, 56). Herrnstein Smith picks up the chain of value where it suits her to do so, forgetting where the surplus-value is being extracted so that the author can sit and make her [*sic*] judgements. If she followed it back, it would lead to the periphery. To quote Spivak again, "the question of Value in its 'materialist' articulation must be asked as the capuccino-drinking worker and the word-processing critic actively forget the actual price-in-exploitation of the machine producing coffee and words." Spivak, "Scattered Speculations," chap. in *In Other Worlds*, 167.

[27] Meese, *(Ex)Tensions*, 31.

[28] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Making of Americans, the Teaching of English, and the Future of Culture Studies," *New Literary History* 21 (1990): 785. Meese provides an embryonic vision of value outside the currently dominant, all-encompassing logic: "The narrative desire I hold for feminist criticism, and for

The final area of Kolodny's theoretical arguments to be discussed is reading: "Insofar as we are taught how to read, what we engage are not texts but paradigms" (*DTM*, 104). Assumptions which guide reading and its interpretation are (over)determined by education and its institutions and authorities, familiarity, and the concomitant panoply of social determinants such as gender, race, and class. They reproduce the conditions of their validity: "The relationship between canon and text is circular: the desire to permit a certain text entry into the canon generates a theory of interpretation that warrants admission, and this theory, in turn, guarantees the admission of like texts into the canon."[29]

Thus, as I argued in the previous chapter, crucial to responding to divergent works is learning to read in different ways. Feminists' interest in reader-response theory begins with this desire to break the oppressive circle of canonical readings of canonical texts. Judith Fetterley's figure of the "resisting reader" was among the first feminist work in this area to provide such a new way of reading.[30] Patrocinio Schweickart has expanded upon Fetterley's insights and woven together many other strands of feminist reader response theory.[31] For Schweickart, any feminist theory of reading must satisfy three criteria: (1) it must take the gender of the text into account; (2) it must "speak of . . . the way the experience and perspective of women have been systematically and fallaciously assimilated in to the gender masculine, and of the need to correct this error"; and (3) "it will identify literature--the activities of reading and

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literary criticism in general, is to create a space for the gifts of respect and reciprocity which have no place in the present economic/political/linguistic systems as they prohibit liberating, egalitarian relationships in favor of a closed system of narcissistic individualism and cultural imperialism. The gift takes us by surprise, (con)structs unsuspected connections between us; it announces itself by disclosing and connecting giver and receiver. Then it is up to me, the recipient to acknowledge and to find its use." Meese, *(Ex)Tensions*, 35. On value and gifts, see also Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, §§24-25.

[29] Heinzelman, "Hard Cases, Easy Cases and Weird Cases," 61.

[30] Judith Fetterley, Introduction to *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978); reprinted in *Feminisms*, ed. Warhol and Price Herndl.

[31] Patrocinio P. Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading" [1984/1986], in *Feminisms*, ed. Warhol and Price Herndl, 525-50. This essay was another winner of the Florence Howe award.

writing--as an important arena of political struggle, a crucial component of the project of interpreting the world in order to change it" (532).[32]

Schweickart proceeds to develop a theory of reading which satisfies these requirements. For the moment, I will concentrate on her model for reading "male texts." Following Jonathan Culler, it comprises three moments. In the first, "control is conferred on the text: the woman reader is immasculated by the text" (539). The second moment is "the recognition of the crucial role played by the subjectivity of the woman reader. Without her, the text is *no-thing*. The process of immasculation is latent in the text, but finds its actualization only through the reader's activity" (540). The third moment is decisive: realising the texts power to structure experience, the feminist reader chooses not to submit, not to 'read the text properly', but to take control of the reading process. This means "reading the text as it was *not* meant to be read, in fact, reading it against itself. Specifically, one must identify the nature of the choices proffered by the text and, equally important, what the text precludes--namely, the possibility of reading as a woman *without* putting one's self in the position of the other" (540).[33]

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[32] Here, of course, Schweickart echoes Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach. A few lines above, she first recalls the eleventh thesis to introduce the crucial concept of *praxis*: "Feminist critics need to question their allegiance to the text and author-centered paradigms of criticism. Feminist criticism, we should remember, is a mode of *praxis*. The point is not merely to interpret literature in various ways; the point is *to change the world*. We cannot afford to ignore the activity of reading, for it is here that literature is realized as *praxis*. Literature acts on the world by acting on its readers" (531). The argument concerning the political content of feminist criticism and its opposition to critical/aesthetic 'appreciation' of texts was a central problem in feminist criticism 15 years ago. In a well-known passage, Toril Moi has given us this decisive comment on political reading: "The difference between feminist and non-feminist criticism is not . . . that the former is political and the latter is not, but that the feminist openly declares her politics, whereas the non-feminist may either be unaware of his own value-system or seek to universalize it as 'non-political'. . . . Aesthetic value judgements are historically relative and . . . are deeply imbricated in political value judgements. . . . Feminist criticism is about deconstructing . . . opposition[s] between the political and the aesthetic: as a political approach to criticism, feminism must be aware of the politics of aesthetic categories as well as the implied aesthetics of political approaches to art. . . . If feminism does not revolt against patriarchal notions of cultural criticism as a 'value-free' exercise, it is in imminent danger of losing the last shreds of its political credibility." Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics* (London: Methuen, 1985), 84-86. See also Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 209-17.

[33] As Catherine Belsey argues, "composed of contradictions, the text is no longer restricted to a single, harmonious and authoritative reading. Instead it becomes *plural*, open to re-reading, no longer an object for passive consumption but an object of work by the reader to produce meaning." Catherine Belsey, "Constructing the Subject: Deconstructing the Text" [1980], in *Feminist Criticism and Social Change*, ed.

All this goes well beyond Kolodny's observations. Schweickart suggests that no reading is non-political and un-gendered. She also suggests that politics, economics, race, and gender, among others, are crucial factors in all discourses.[34] What is more, some readings serve emancipatory goals and some serve oppressive ones. It is not just, as Kolodny suggests, that a more intimate "acquaintance" with women's concerns and a new "competent reading community" will bring about a "radical break" in reading comprehension and usher women's texts into the canon (*DTM*, 106-107). On the contrary, such additional knowledge is more likely to merely add a few illustrious feminine names to the list of canonical authors, ones who can gain admission by the old standards, leaving the standards and their oppressive politics intact. As Schweickart and others make clear, political, gendered, oppositional consciousness and reading is required for any radical break. For lack of knowledge is not the only or even the most important barrier, but rather it is what the old canons *allow* and *sanction* as knowledge and the irreconcilable differences of political and economic interests, among other things, which ground the maintenance of privilege.

* * *

It is arguments such as the one Kolodny makes about reading that lead to the third and most controversial part of her famous essay in which she develops her critical and political approach: "playful" or "critical" pluralism (*DTM*, 110-111).[35] Where

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Newton and Rosenfelt, 54.

[34] Although what is missing here is "a reading method that is sensitive to gender, race, and class" and their specificities. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Feminism and Critical Theory," chap. in *In Other Worlds*, 81.

[35] My understanding of pluralism in literary studies is most indebted to Ellen Rooney's excellent book, *Seductive Reasoning: Pluralism as the Problematic of Contemporary Literary Theory* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989). Rooney introduces and defines her object as follows: "In my analysis, . . . hegemonic pluralism emerges as a double strategy--for reading and writing--structured around the problem of persuasion. . . . The pluralist's invitation to critics and theorists of all kinds to join him in 'dialogue' is a seductive gesture that constitutes every interpreter--*no matter what her conscious critical affiliation*--as an effect of the desire to persuade. . . . Pluralistic forms of discourse first imagine a universal community in which every individual (reader) is a potential convert, vulnerable to persuasion, and then require that each critical utterance aim at the successful persuasion of this community in general, that is, in its entirety. This demand ensures a conversation in which every critic must address a general or universal audience. This theoretical generality marks the limit of the pluralist's humanism, and it is the only absolute pluralism

she suggests that women authors have failed to make it into the canon due to "an incapacity of predominantly male readers to properly interpret and appreciate women's texts--due, in large part, to a lack of prior acquaintance" (105-106), it is but one example of the language of persuasion as it operates throughout the essay. By "taking full responsibility," "justifying the excellence of women's traditions," and more "attentiveness," feminist critics may enter into "true dialogue" with non-feminist critics. Thus, "biases," "omissions," and "oversights" will be corrected that those who come after may "dance through the minefield." This affable vision of critical discourse, of honourable intent, sensibility, accessibility, and concord, finds full expression in a final disavowal of conflictual significance and resistance: "All the feminist is asserting, then, is her own equivalent right to liberate new (and perhaps different) significances from these same texts; and, at the same time, her right to choose which features of a text she takes as relevant because she is, after all, asking new and different questions of it" (110).

Here, paradoxically, is the limit of feminist conciliation. In assuming a stance of dulcet persuasion toward the critical audience, she cedes the centre to the male critical establishment, submits to the standards of the critical community, grants its basic rightness, and promises to behave. The feminists will now lie down in the armoury of critical methods. What is more, she places herself within that community of presumed equals, arguing, in effect, that while she tries to persuade, she too is open to persuasion; she is ready to be *included*. But most importantly, in placing feminist criticism under the name pluralism and explicitly rejecting the adequacy of any other approach, she reproduces (between women) the homogenisation, exclusion of exclusion, the invisibility of otherness and even conflict which marks the margin of the hegemonic pluralist community, feminist or otherwise. Kolodny's pluralist republic of literary criticism places beyond its borders those marginal women who must say, 'I cannot be persuaded' and 'You do not care to persuade me'.

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requires to sustain its practice" (1-2). See also Elizabeth A. Meese, *Crossing the Double-Cross: The Practice of Feminist Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), chap. 1.

For these reasons in particular, Kolodny's essay has acted as a lightening rod for anti-pluralist feminist objections and minority objections to "hegemonic feminism." Jane Marcus's is probably the best known of the anti-pluralist attacks. In her essay "Storming the Toolshed," she delivers these forceful lines: "It is far too early to tear down the barricades. Dancing shoes will not do. We still need our heavy boots and mine detectors." Calling Kolodny's move a "liberal relaxation of tensions among us and the tensions between feminists and the academy," Marcus suggests that "what this does is isolate Marxist feminists and lesbians on the barricades while the 'good girl' feminists fold their tents and slip quietly into the establishment."[36]

When first responding publically to criticism of her pluralist position, Kolodny made it clear that her invocation of pluralism was a strategy to avoid "divisive sectarianism" within the field of feminism and "the risk of ending up as separate camps, warring with one another." She opposed it to "dogma" and asserted that "it encourages dialogue between competing possibilities and, just as important, it honors the value of having competing possibilities."[37] Kolodny is less clear about the relationship between feminist pluralism and critical pluralism in general, but she hints at it in her symptomatic comment concerning "the center's being enlarged so as to accommodate those previously at the periphery" (667). As I have attempted to show in my discussions of canons, no circle is large enough to swallow its margins; new boundaries emerge in the attempt, and the dead weight at the centre is not being asked to move anywhere.

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[36] Jane Marcus, "Storming the Toolshed," *Signs* 7 (Fall 1982): 623. Gayatri Spivak makes a similar point (cited by Marcus) in her unpublished, widely circulated "A Reply to Annette Kolodny" (1980): "To embrace pluralism (as Kolodny recommends) is to espouse the politics of the masculinist establishment. Pluralism is the method employed by the *central* authorities to neutralize opposition by seeming to accept it. The gesture of pluralism on the part of the *marginal* can only mean capitulation to the center. It is not a question of the choice of methodologies [as Kolodny suggests] but rather of who is officially in power. However pluralist its demeanor, American liberal masculism (alias humanism) will never declare that it is merely one of many plausible choices." Quoted in Rooney, 242. For other discussions in the works I have consulted, see Meese, *Crossing the Double-Cross*, chap. 1, and 141-42; Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics*, chap. 4. For a brief discussion of the possibility of a "positive" feminist anti-pluralism, see Rooney, *Seductive Reasoning*, 242-51. Rooney introduces anti-pluralism as follows: "To recognize exclusion is to respect the limits that interests impose on the very possibility of persuasion. . . . The anti-pluralist marks exclusions and only thus escapes the problematic of general persuasion" (6).

[37] The discussion I refer to here appeared as "An Interchange on Feminist Criticism: On 'Dancing Through the Minefield'," *Feminist Studies* 8 (Fall 1982): 629-75. For Judith Kegan Gardiner's comments on pluralism, see 629, 634-35; for Kolodny's reply, see 666-67.

So who emerges at Kolodny's new, irreducible margin? Kolodny is forced to reinscribe explicitly her limits (of pluralism). They are surprisingly close to home. The two other writers in the *Feminist Studies* "Interchange," Elly Bulkin and Rena Grasso Patterson, are banished from the "sisterly" fold. Calling them "ill-willed" and "gratuitously thoughtless," Kolodny retorted: "I am distressed at having my person and my work used as an occasion for an attack on the sins of the academy in general and the omissions of (white) feminists in particular--*as though I either sanctioned or were in some way responsible for either*" (674). This kind of dismissive, defensive denial exactly reproduces the conditions of Kolodny's critics' opposition. Their critique turned out to be the herald of things to come, of feminism's searching auto-critique, which gradually emerged during the 1980s and is now being called "third wave feminism."

Bulkin and Grasso Patterson uncompromisingly address many of the issues and draw on many of the sources which would undermine the attempt to shore up a feminist consensus and which has led to wide-spread attention to Sandoval's and others' critiques of "hegemonic feminism." According to Bulkin and Grasso Patterson, Kolodny's essay represents only one strain of feminist criticism--a racist, classist, heterosexist strain practised by white liberals in the academy. Kolodny pays "honor" to 'diversity' while denying and thus perpetuating more substantial, consequential conflicts among women by simply ignoring or subsuming segments of feminist literary *praxis* that are marginal to her own. Here, diversity, like the invocation of plurality in pluralism, is self-univeralising and merely dismissive or, at best, accomodating, repressively tolerant.

Particularly pertinent for librarians is Bulkin's specific analysis and critique of the feminist institutional and bibliographic apparatuses and their significance for the sociology of knowledge:

> The crucial question of what gets placed within the realm of "feminist literary criticism" apparently falls outside the scope of Kolodny's article.

> Consequently, she accepts without reservation as "appropriate" for discussion those books and articles that--whatever their individual merits--almost all fall within a narrow range of political perspective and critical approach. She does not consider the likelihood that the farther outside this range an article or book falls--through directly raising issues of heterosexism, classism, racism, *as well as* sexism; through incorporating work on and by women in our *actual* diversity in an organic way; through diverging from traditional academic approaches to criticism--the less likely it is to be published in the places (*not* Third World publications, *not* lesbian publications) where those who make such determinations are most likely to take it seriously as "criticism." Nor does Kolodny consider the possibility that the woman who questions these academic standards with their attendant biases might herself find such publications (despite stated good intentions) inhospitable, and thereby choose not to censor herself, not to alter her words for the sake of publication, not to submit her work to academic publications--women's studies or not.[38]

Although Kolodny found it distressing to be contextualised, she in fact relies upon that "narrow range" of 'appropriate' sources (e.g., Showalter, Gilbert, Gubar, Moers, and Meyer Spacks) for her account of feminist literary criticism's major achievements. And as this thesis itself reflects, the work of these women has indeed survived as the 'central' contribution to feminist literary studies in the 1970s. Of course, Bulkin's comments also implicate the feminist press, feminist journals, as well as the academy, librarians, and the other instruments of cultural discipline. Her radical resistance is one event in the auto-critique and proliferation of academic feminisms during the 1980s and into the 1990s. The narrative I shall attempt to construct next is another.

Narration 5: Retrieving Information

> You can't just be a revolutionary tourist and be the Saviour of the world on your off days.
>
> --Gayatri Spivak, "Neocolonialism and the Secret Agent of Knowledge"

On 10 May 1993, more than 200 workers burned to death in a factory at Nakhon Pathom, Thailand. The AP reporter on the story suspected it to be the largest death toll ever in a factory fire.[39] "Most of the victims were young women, who make up about 80 percent of Thailand's low-wage factory work force." According to the AP writer, 800 workers in the four-story building had access to two fire-escapes. The Taiwanese- and Thai-owned factory made dolls for export. As Gayatri Spivak says while telling a similar story, "Socialized capital kills by remote control. . . . [It] has not moved far from the presuppositions of a slave mode of production."[40]

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[38] "Interchange," 642-43.

[39] "Deaths Climb to 200 as the Thais Begin Inquiry Into Fire at Factory," *New York Times*, 12 May 1993,

I remember that day because I first heard of it the following day, 11 May, my birthday. For me, it is a regulative story, because it demonstrates in a variety of ways the unequivocal antagonism, the fraught contradiction, between feminism and capitalism.

Spivak's story is even more germane to a discussion of librarianship, because it involves a Minnesota-based computer company with 'progressive' (even 'feminist') labour policies in the U.S. but a quite different standard in its urban Korean production facilities. This allows her to telescope the complex interconnections and overdeterminations amongst information/education technology, 'civilizing' and so-called Western civilization, the circulation of capital, exploitation, and the oppression of Third World women in the global enterprise of neo-colonialism. Moreover, it is accomplished with the complicity of First World bourgeois feminism. In fact, Spivak has extensively critiqued information technology and its applications in a 'humanist' academy wilfully ignorant of these connections. In other words, information technology operates in her work as a regulative metaphor and metonym which might be used as a deconstructive and critical lever within the academy. To read it this way opens a window into her complex writings through which academic librarians may begin to look. I have already briefly mentioned this work in terms of the predication of value and subjectivity.[41] In this section, however, I want to talk about another side

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[40] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Methuen, 1988), 90-91. Hereafter cited as *IOW*.

[41] See n. 26 above. The chain of value is increasingly anchored in the Third World. To spell it out: "It is possible to suggest to the so-called 'Third World' that it *produces* the wealth and the possibility of the cultural self-representation of the 'First World'." In other words, "it is only through the argument that there

of this critique under her metonym "information retrieval."

First, however, it is crucial to map briefly the trajectory of Spivak's writing and speaking over the past fifteen years. I do this in the interest of showing some ways radical scholarship may transgress a classification's supposedly natural identities and disciplinary boundaries and 'combine' theoretical perspectives. Gayatri Spivak was born in Calcutta, British India. During the late 1950s, Spivak studied English literature and was influenced by Second International communism. In 1961, she began graduate work at Cornell University, eventually completing a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, then under the directorship of Paul de Man. Her interest in deconstruction specifically and in French philosophy generally found expression in her 1976 translation *Of Grammatology*, the first English translation among Derrida's major texts. For this, Spivak gained wide recognition in some circles. During the late 1970s, she was recognised as a leading North American authority on deconstruction and French feminism.[42]

However, Spivak resisted this classification. During this time and while teaching English literary studies in the U.S., Spivak was developing a critique of Western culture and (British) imperialism which combined Marxism, feminism, and deconstruction with the study of discursive production, including 'literature'. She has

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is this contentless, mediating differential which allows labor power to valorize value that is, the possibility of exchange and surplus, that we can grasp that the manipulation of Third World labor sustaining the continued resources of the U.S. academy which produces the ideological supports for that very manipulation" (*PCC*, 96, 97). Here is a characteristic comment about the necessary kind of cultural 'dynamism', to which I will return below: "It is a well-documented fact that technological capitalism must be dynamic in order to survive and must find newer methods of extracting surplus value from labor. Its 'civilizing' efforts are felt everywhere and are not to be dismissed and ignored. In every humanistic discipline and every variety of fine art, the exigencies of the production and reproduction of capital produce impressive and exquisite by-products. In our own bailiwick [arts/humanities], one of them would be such a group as ourselves [humanists], helping to hold money in the institutional humanistic budget, producing explanations in terms of pure categories such as cognition, epistemology, the aesthetic, interpretation, and the like; at the other might be the tremendous exploitable energy of the freshman English machine as a panacea for social justice. Between the two poles (one might find other pairs) the humanities are being trashed" (*IOW*, 109).

[42] Spivak, "An Interview with Gayatri Spivak," *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, no. 9 (1990): 81. Spivak's most influential essay on French feminism is undoubtedly "French Feminism in an International Frame," in *IOW*, 134-53 (first published in 1981 in *Yale French Studies*). The biographical details come from Spivak, "Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: New Nation Writers Conference in South Africa," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 23, no. 3 (July 1992): 32-36.

called it "the study of cultural politics," which she conceives as part of the larger project of by-now-familiar Cultural Studies. Within the narrower disciplinary context of the departments of national literatures and comparative literary studies, she has called this a "transnational study of culture."[43] At the same time, she undertook a thorough and persistent critique of each of the explanatory identities under which she spoke: post-colonial Asian intellectual, North American literary academic, Marxist, feminist woman, and deconstructivist critic. This has to some extent brought her under the suspicious gaze of all these communities.

Spivak's account of the relationships between and amongst these various disciplinary and transdisciplinary discourses is particularly relevant to the social relations of knowledge production as it occupies some librarians. First, the point is decidedly not to form new disciplines or new institutional structures. As I mentioned above in a slightly different context (chap. 2, n. 12), Spivak argues that academic separatism and the proliferation of 'free' spaces too easily becomes (1) an excuse not to engage in close, empirical work, including disciplinary and joint work requiring rigorous, critical attention to two or more disciplines and languages, (2) an alibi for avoiding confronting and contesting the powers and vested interests within the disciplines themselves, and (3) *carte blanche* for business as usual in the disciplines, including for "the ruthless operation of neo-colonialist knowledge" and the production of racist, sexist, imperialist, oppressive explanations.[44] Spivak is, instead, describing new specialities within and among disciplines, specialities *which bring their host disciplines and their knowledge production, indeed the academy itself, to serious, productive crisis* through persistent (auto)critique.[45]

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[43] Spivak, "The Making of Americans," 791. She has defined the study of cultural politics as the study of "the way in which cultural explanations are generated." She explains: "It seems to me that *culture* is a word which is now being used to give a sense of why large groups of people behave in certain ways. In other words, culture is being used as a description of collective agency, and these descriptions are almost always generated in order to manage various kinds of crisis. So, a study of cultural politics is a study of the politics of the production of cultural explanations that are used in the academy, outside the academy, in global politics, in metropolitan politics, in national politics of various kinds, migrant politics of various kinds, articulations of majority and minority, domination/exploitation, a very wide field of managing various kinds of crises that are coming up in order give people who act within these crises a certain way of describing what the position is." Spivak, "Rhetoric and Cultural Explanation: A Discussion with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak," interview by Phillip Sipiora and Janet Atwill, *Journal of Advanced Composition* 10 (Fall 1990): 295. See also "Neocolonialism" for an account of cultural politics as a supplement to Marxism. Crucial works in her own development of this position, in addition to those found in *IOW* (1978-1987), include: "Three Feminist Readings: McCullers, Drabble, Habermas," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 35 (Fall/Winter 1979-80): 15-34; "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313; "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn 1985): 243-61.

The notions of "interruption" and "productive crisis" lie behind much of Spivak's work, including her disciplinary situation and the often-questioned relationships amongst her uses and critiques of feminism, Marxism, and deconstruction. In a deconstructive re-inscription of the dialectic, (auto)critique proceeds "from a space that one cannot not want to inhabit and yet must criticize," recognising the dangerousness of the position in question but also acknowledging its desirability and usefulness (PV, 228). The dynamo of the critique is an *interruption*, which may be provisionally defined as a reminder of the catachresis in all names/terms/positions, of the impossibility (but irreducibility) of knowledge and closure, *of the exclusions or the margin of the position which allows it to function*; "all of a sudden becoming aware that, in fact, there is an infinite regress on the margins of your substantive work" (*PCC*, 44).[46] Thus: "Any critique of strategic exclusions should bring analytical presuppositions to crisis. Marxism and feminism must become persistent interruptions of each other" (*IOW*, 249).[47] So the interruption hopefully leads to productive crisis.[48] Crises have at least two moments: first, recognition of the interruption, and, second, management. Within Spivak's work, crisis management is conceived as part of the larger context of crisis theory in political economy. Crisis is the pre-condition for the operation of the dialectic. The management of crises is contested, though, with capital's realisation in the abstract as such, this is only true in the remotest way or within the narrow world of the academy. And it is, of course, important to add that as the contradictions increase in intensity (as in advanced capitalist societies), they are increasingly unmanagable. But in any event, the goal of contestation is not balance or resolution, and *Aufhebung* is not within sight. Rather, interested interventions on the ground require less glamorous but no less conflictual attributes: strategy, negotiation with the violence of the (op)position, 'shuttling', displacement, and, above all, persistence and vigilance. "The deconstructivist can use herself (assuming one is at one's own disposal) as a shuttle between the center (inside) and the margin (outside) and thus narrate a displacement" (*IOW*, 107).[49]

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[44] Spivak, "In a Word. *Interview*," 133, 143-44.

[45] On the other hand, this does not imply that Spivak argues for the received disciplinary division of labour. She argues, instead, as do most politically aware academics: "Academics are in the business of ideological production; even academics in the pure sciences are involved in that process. This possibility leads to the notion of disciplinary as well as institutional situation, and then to the subtler question of precise though often much mediated functions within the institution of a nation state. Thus one cannot canonize one's own discipline and say 'I don't have to know . . . ' Don't canonize the disciplinary divisions of labor. Some of us need to know this. Our institutional responsibility is of course to offer a responsible critique of the structure of production of the knowledge we teach even as we teach it" (*PCC*, 103). Probably closer to the mark is her appropriation of Althusser's concept of "*una Pratique Sauvage*" (*PCC*, 3-4).

[46] Here, Spivak uses the terms 'theory/practice' as an example; see also *PCC*, 139, 141, where the examples are feminism/women's movement, U.S. anti-racism/anti-imperialism, feminism/Marxism, and global benevolence/emancipatory underlabouring; see also *PCC*, 110-111, where she discusses Marxism and feminism and Left solidarity in terms of interruptions.

[47] The essay in which this statement appears, "A Literary Representation of the Subaltern: A Woman's Text From the Third World" [1987], chap. in *IOW*, 241-68, is the *locus classicus* for Spivak's notion of

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interruption. Here, she uses Mahasweta Devi's short story "Stanadayini" ["Breast-Giver"] to critically interrupt Western Marxist feminism, Western liberal feminism, and French high theory. She also articulates interruptions on a number of other levels. For example: "The position that only the subaltern can know the subaltern, only women can know women and so on, cannot be held as a theoretical presupposition, either, for it predicates the possibility of knowledge on identity. Whatever the political necessity for holding the position, and whatever the advisability of attempting to "identify" (with) the other as subject in order to know her, knowledge is made possible and is sustained by irreducible difference, not identity. What is known is always in excess of knowledge. Knowledge is never adequate to its object. The theoretical model of the ideal knower in the embattled position we are discussing is that of the person identical with her predicament. This is actually the figure of the impossibility and non-necessity of knowledge. Here the relationship between the practical--need for claiming subaltern identity--and the theoretical--no program of knowledge production can presuppose identity as origin--is, once again, of an "interruption" that persistently brings each term to crisis" (*IOW*, 253-54).

[48] Interruption and crisis are not discrete moments; indeed, Spivak often refers to interrupting as "bringing to crisis." I separate them here for the sake of exposition and argument.

[49] "I think that tension is productive, whereas balance is suspect. . . . If the middle term is treated as a balance, a mediator, then a new system of privilege is created. . . . That [system of privilege] . . . does not strike a balance between two ends, but rather hierarchizes that 'balanced space' into a privileged space. I'm much more interested in the 'shuttle' between one end and the other and in the one end bringing the other to productive and real crisis rather than finding a middle space where an 'apparent balance' is created. . . . I'm much more interested in persistent critique" (Spivak, "Rhetoric and Cultural Explanation," 296). Also: "Mediations are always interested. There is always a residue of either this or that side in the way in which mediations are performed. . . . Any mediation will always be a theory of mediation" (ibid., 297). By the same token: "theory always norms practice. When you practice, as it were, you construct a theory and

Spivak's work over the past decade and-a-half, then, can be understood as a persistent auto-critique of the disciplines of the North American academy, of Western feminism and Marxism, and of deconstruction, through the critical interruption of each with a critical account of (the) other(s). Thus, Marxism may be said to bring feminism to crisis and vice versa, while sexual politics offers a critique of deconstruction. The critique of neo-colonialism interrupts the production of internationalist and postmodern feminism and Marxism.[50] Internationalist feminism, Marxism, and the critiques of imperialism and neo-colonialism also become interruptions of the liberal humanities in the North American academy, revealing, among other things, the specificity and provincialism of their claim to universality. At the same time, Spivak uses philosophy, Marxism, and transnational cultural studies to bring literary studies to serious crisis. In so doing, she acts as a shuttle between the so-called First and the Third World(s), persistently and vigilantly pointing out how the discourse of the former constructs and silences the latter, while the latter brings the most basic presuppositions of the former to serious crisis. More recently, Spivak has shown how the study of transnational cultural politics, here from the position of Marxist-feminist deconstruction, interrupts the practices of (among others) History, Jurisprudence, and Film Studies.[51]

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irreducibly the practice will norm the theory, rather than be an example of indirect theoretical application" (*PCC*, 44). On negotiation: "one tries to change something that one is obliged to inhabit, since one is not working from the outside. In order to keep one's effectiveness, one must also preserve those structures [of violence and violation]--not cut them down completely" (*PCC*, 72). In other words, "once you are aware that the only way in which you can deconstruct is by making the structure of that which you critique the structure of your own criticism, then you become conscious of the limitations of total escape. . . . If you escape in the end, you lose" (*PCC*, 45). On these points, see also *PCC*, 147-48; Spivak, "In a Word. *Interview*" 126-30.

[50] For some recent developments in one of these areas (perhaps the most important in this context), see Amy Kaminsky, "Issues for an International Feminist Literary Criticism," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 19 (Autumn 1993): 213-27.

[51] Respectively: "Feminism in Decolonization," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 3, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 139-70; "Constitutions and Culture Studies," *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities* 2 (Winter 1990): 133-47; and PV. Spivak's work since her teaching return to India in 1987 has taken a somewhat different approach. While she is still within the general problematic of what she describes as being "caught *within* the desire of the European consciousness to turn towards the East" (*PCC*, 8), she is now, in her own words, "much more interested in looking at Indians as in the subject position. Rather than as an object of investigation" (*PCC*, 91). It is beyond the scope of this thesis and the powers of its writer to explore the significance of this shift here.

* * *

In the context of the North American academy, "information retrieval" forms a part of Spivak's critique of a mode of neo-colonial production of knowledge about the Third World. It is an element of and a sanction for a "new Orientalism" which has arisen as an effect of the attempt by internationalist feminists, socialists, and post-structuralists to undo the damage done by Western colonialism and imperialism and its grounding in the presupposition of cultural supremacy. The *locus classicus* for the explication of this argument is the introduction to Spivak's translation of Mahasweta Devi's "Draupadi," addressed to North American internationalist feminists:

> We speak for ourselves, we urge with conviction: the personal is also political. For the rest of the world's women, the sense of whose personal micrology is difficult (though not impossible) for us to acquire, we fall back on a colonialist theory of most efficient information retrieval. We will not be able to speak to the women out there if we depend completely on conferences and anthologies by Western-trained informants. (*IOW*, 179)

Retrieving information about the Third World is the necessary pre-condition for decolonization and the critique of neo-colonialism. However, it is not sufficient, and where it is limited to its "most efficient" forms, it furnishes a dangerous sanction for the continued neo-colonial oppression of the Other subjects/spaces. In that case, it acts as the "legitimizing counterpart" (*PCC*, 91) for the construction of the Third World woman as the object of the new form of orientalism. More is required.

This roughly sketches the situation as it stands in the Western, First World academy. Now I will back up somewhat and attempt to define the terms of Spivak's (auto)critique and some of the relationships among its parts.

The current turn toward the so-called Third World by radicals in the Western academy takes place within and, in certain of its forms, reinforces the neo-colonialism that now characterises the relationships and engagements between the First World, "metropolitan" countries and their citizens, and rest of the world, the periphery and the post-colonials which inhabit that space. "Neo-colonialism" is a way of describing the historical and geographical varieties and specificities of these relationships following the Second World War, when the United States took over from Britain as the world's leading imperial power. Neo-colonialism is primarily an economic form of colonial policy, with military, cultural, political, ideological, and other aspects taking on greater levels of significance in some places and moments. In addition, neo-colonialism has "internal" and "external" aspects, the latter describing said relations among nations or states and the former describing relations within nations or states, between immigrant colonizers and the indigenous or imported (in the case of slavery) colonized subjects/spaces.[52] Here, I am concerned with one small aspect of this world-historical phenomenon; that is, the conditions for and effects of neo-colonialism in the production of knowledge in the metropolitan states, and more specifically yet, in the Western academy. Knowledge production becomes the neo-colonial production of knowledge where it is structured by neo-colonialism and when it supplies the economic and cultural explanations which act as "alibis" for the continuation of oppression and exploitation.[53]

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[52] Neo-colonialism is difficult to define beyond its specific manifestations. In one place, Spivak describes it as "the chief aftermath of colonialism . . . (the dynamic changes in policy to keep pace with the dissolution of the British into the American Empire after the first centuries of imperial harvest), forever attempting to regulate the glove into uniformity" (Spivak, "Feminism in Decolonization," 141). See "Neocolonialism," 220-23. On the dangers of easy analogies between "internal" and "external" neo-colonialism, see Spivak, "The Making of Americans," 792-93.

[53] To anticipate the presentation a little and to forestall a certain kind of objection: "It is not only that lines separate ethnic, gender, and class prejudice in the metropolitan countries from *indigenous* co-operation with neo-colonialism outside, in the Third World proper. It is also that arguments from culturalism, multi-culturalism and ethnicity, however insular and heteromorphous they might seem from the great narratives of the techniques of global financial control, con work to obscure such separations in the interests of the production of a neo-colonial discourse" (PV, 222).

A word about knowledge as condition and effect, structure and effect, enablement and violation, in the academies of metropolitan nations and states. 'Knowledge is power', says the adage. But more to the point, the will to knowledge, the desire to know and to explain "might be a symptom of the desire to have a self that can control knowledge and a world that can be known" (*IOW*, 104). At the very least, explanations presuppose explaining subjects in an explainable reality. This is but the most general level of what may be illustrated from the production of specific explanations, e.g., humanists' "assigned role is, seemingly, the custodianship of culture. If as I have argued the concept and self-concept of culture as systems of habit are constituted by the production of explanations even as they make these explanations possible, our role is to produce and be produced by the *official* explanations in terms of the powers that police the entire society, emphasizing a continuity or a discontinuity with past explanations, depending on a seemingly judicious choice permitted by the play of this power. As we produce the official explanations, we reproduce the official ideology, the structure of the possibility of knowledge whose effect is that very structure. Our circumscribed productivity cannot be dismissed as a mere keeping of records. We are part of the records we keep" (*IOW*, 108).

Spivak articulates the role of the North American academy in decolonization as follows:

> [The limited task of the academic disciplines in the United States is] to undo the effects of the colonialist history on the production of knowledge. This undoing involves at least two registers: a) the retrieval of information to restore the balance of historical knowledge; and b) the securing of this restoration by continuing efforts at a transformation of consciousness, a decolonizing of the mind, so that information retrieval does not simply add quantitatively to the production of knowledge. . . . Today's question, therefore, is not only what it is to know about colonized peoples, but what it is to learn, to presuppose their different transactions with colonialism, in their role as different kinds of *agents* of social production. It is to tease out the protective colorings of the colonized, from themselves and others, and the class- and gender-marked emergence of post-coloniality, the aftermath of colonialism.[54]

Two kinds of related problems can arise when information retrieval (a) happens in the absence of decolonization of the mind (b). The first involves the process of information retrieval itself, while the second emerges from the production unleashed within the ignorance sanctioned by that dumb, though 'efficient', retrieval.

Information retrieval here is the mechanism by which the information is gathered about the colonized peoples with which knowledge is produced about them. This mechanism begs the question: who and what is retrieved? This raises the issue of representation in two forms: who is doing the representing and what is their interest in such a representation. The issue of 'who' can be answered: whoever has or is given access to the apparatus by which things are retrieved. 'What' can be answered: whatever can be understood within (to reinforce) the system of meaning under which the negotiation takes place.

Information retrieval takes place within the structures of knowledge production in the Western academy (among other places, e.g., mass media). These structures include the disciplines, their communication apparatuses, and epistemological presuppositions which evaluate and certify knowledge. What effects do these structures have on the retrieval of information about colonized peoples?

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[54] Spivak, "Feminism in Decolonization," 140.

> As this material begins to be absorbed into the discipline [literary studies], the *long-established but supple, heterogeneous and hierarchical power-lines of the institutional "dissemination of knowledge" continue to determine and overdetermine their condition of representability*. It is at the moment of infiltration or insertion, sufficiently under threat by custodians of a fantasmatic high Western culture, that the greatest caution must be exercised. The price of success must not compromise the enterprise irreparably. In that spirit of caution, it might not be inappropriate to notice that, as teachers, we are now involved in constructing a new object of investigation--'the third world', 'the marginal'--for institutional validation and certification. One has only to analyse carefully the proliferating but exclusivist 'Third-World-ist'job descriptions to see the packaging at work. (PV, 221-22; my emphasis)

Spivak might just as well have noted the proliferating 'calls' (from the packagers, above all) for multi-cultural collecting, or the burgeoning traffic in cultural studies and 'Third World' books and journals. So, now, who is given access to the engines for the retrieval of representability, to those institutional structures that certify knowledge? "Neocolonialism is fabricating its allies by proposing a share of the centre in a seemingly new way (not a rupture but a displacement): disciplinary support for the conviction of authentic marginality by the (aspiring) elite" (Ibid.). The statement applies both to the indigenous co-operation by "the indigenous post-colonial elite, diasporic or otherwise" (*IOW*, 254) and to radicals in the Western academy seeking tenure masking desire for upward mobility as benevolence. A certain relationship, a kind of enforced collaboration, obtains between these two groups. The former (including Spivak herself) are tokenized by the latter, asked to 'speak for', to 'speak as', to (self-)represent. The conferences, the presses, the campuses, the libraries are opened up (anthologies, translations, etc., are produced and marketed). The standing bibliographic apparatuses of other places are probed for sources (including by "multicultural librarianship"[55]). "When the cardcarrying listeners, the hegemonic people, the dominant people, . . . want to hear an Indian speaking as an Indian, a Third World woman speaking as a Third World woman, they cover over the fact of the ignorance that they are allowed to possess, into a kind of homogenization" (*PCC*, 62).

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[55] See, for example, Marie F. Zielinska, ed., *Multicultural Librarianship: An International Handbook*, IFLA Publications, no. 59 (München: K. G. Saur, 1992).

So it must be asked: what is excluded so that this narrative, this series of staged representations, can emerge (be retrieved)? It is precisely the voice of the "subaltern," particularly the "gendered subaltern." This problem is complex and is intricately addressed in Spivak's well-known "Can the Subaltern Speak?" A decidedly unrepresentative quote from its fourth section will serve my purpose here:

> Reporting on, or better still, participating in, antisexist work among women of color or women in class oppression in the First World or the Third World is undeniably on the agenda. We should also welcome all the information retrieval in these silenced areas that is taking place in anthropology, political science, history, and sociology. Yet the assumption and construction of a consciousness or subject sustains such work and will, in the long run, cohere with the work of imperialist subject-constitution, mingling epistemic violence with the advancement of learning and civilization. And the subaltern woman will be as mute as ever.
>
> In so fraught a field, it is not easy to ask the question of the consciousness of the subaltern woman; it is thus all the more necessary to remind pragmatic radicals that such a question is not an idealist red herring. Though all feminist or antisexist projects cannot be reduced to this one, to ignore it is an unacknowledged political gesture that has a long history and collaborates with a masculine radicalism that renders the place of the investigator transparent. In seeking to learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for) the historically muted subject of the subaltern woman, the postcolonial intellectual *systematically* "unlearns" female privilege. This systematic unlearning involves learning to critique postcolonial discourse with the best tools it can provide and not simply substituting the lost figure of the colonized. (295)

The subaltern woman thus marks not only the homogenization and the failure of representation in efficient retrieval, but also an interruption of First World feminism, indeed, all doctrines in the metropolis (including radical ones) along with their collaborators in the periphery. It may be helpful at this point to mention one of Spivak's regulative narratives: "when I think of the masses, I think of a woman belonging to that 84% of women's work in India, which is unorganized peasant labour" (*PCC*, 56). Not all of that woman's problems are recognisable as 'women's problems'. This brings "single-issue feminism" to serious crisis, where such feminism claims patriarchy as the determinant of the last instance or uncritically stakes its claims on individual rights.[56] This is one light in which Spivak speaks of "the inbuilt colonialism of First World feminism toward the Third" (*IOW*, 153). First-World feminist information retrieval without decolonization perpetuates the subalternity of women elsewhere.

On the other hand, the goal is not to arrest the subaltern consciousness in order to understand it, nor to construct it, nor to attempt to participate in a self-marginalizing purism or authenticity which would contribute to its continuing subalternization.[57] The goal is to *clear the way*, to underlabour, for "reversing, displacing, and seizing the apparatus of value-coding" (PV, 228).

The question of cultural self-representation, then, is a difficult one which the academy, let alone academic librarianship, has only begun to address. In general, Spivak talks about three ways in which the problem of representation is managed in neo-colonialism. Each of these methods is enabled and legitimated by the "colonialist theory of most efficient information retrieval" as described above.

(1) Cultural relativism ("Neocolonialism," 224-25): "One of the strongest functioning of unwitting neocolonialism is the production of models of identity [in the humanities and social sciences] is the production of models of identity from supposedly the history of other places where the epistemic transformation is rights talk among a certain class." This "gives an alibi for entry into the neocolonial sector" and matches on the ideological level "the collaboration of indigenous capital thinking of development.[58]

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[56] See *PCC*, 80, 118; on single-issue feminism in a slightly different political context, see Brenner, "The Best of Times, the Worst of Times," 134-37.

[57] Spivak cautions against "unexamined nativism": "To keep the rest of the world obliged to remain confined within a mere ethnic pride and an acting out of a basically static ethnicity is to confuse political gestures with an awareness of history. That confinement was rather astutely practiced by the traditionally defined disciplinary subdivision of labor within history, anthropology, and comparative literature. Culture studies must set up an active give-and-take with them so that it gains in substance what it provides in method. And, educators must educate themselves in effective interdisciplinary (postdisciplinary?) teaching." Spivak, "The Making of Americans," 793-94.

[58] Spivak's example: "Much has been made of the fact that forty upper-class Saudi Arabian women drove cars. Soon there will be a discourse which will say that the people of Saudi Arabia and the women of Saudi Arabia really are like us. So we must help them to become more like us. We must not identify governments

(2) Ignoring the subaltern ("Neocolonialism," 225-26): "Cultural*ism* in the other Third World cultures is in itself a class-based thing. . . . Nation-building culturalist activities really have nothing to do with a very important part of the country, which is precisely what I am calling the subaltern." However, this culturalism is readily retrievable, highly visible, and politically correct within a easy, "benevolent," "multiculturalist, culturally relativist knowledge-production" which "leaves the heterogeneity of other spaces aside." It "constantly celebrates the other space as just one moment in the metropolitan ['global'] state, . . . celebrates the migrant and the hybrid at the expense of the differance at the origin" ("Neocolonialism," 229). In its pop-culture manifestations, this degenerates into the banality of the multi-cultural fun-fair. And it is not just First-World academics who ignore the subaltern while they move up the ranks. It is also an effect of the desire, fear, *ressentiment*, and self-representation of a certain element of the post-colonial elite.[59]

(3) Colonials are objects not agents of knowledge ("Neocolonialism," 237-38): "Colonials, even upper-class colonials, do not exist as agents of knowledge. . . . You never see anything that actually puts them on the same level of human agency." For example, in historical and anthropological writing, colonial subjects disappear, the Colonial Subject appearing shorn of any kind of agency, let alone the agency of legitimate, certifiable knowledge. Again, this is a many-sided problem: "this refusal . . . has been conflated with a longing for plain prose." Studying it requires a discusses of agency, structure, subjectivity, and 'theory'. Objects of knowledge, "the *deserving* poor" become so honoured by being good objects.[60]

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and people."

[59] Spivak's example: "The relationship between the writer of 'vernacular' and Indo-Anglian literatures is a site of class-cultural struggle. this struggle is not reflected in personal confrontations. Indeed, the spheres of Indo-Anglian writing and vernacular writing are not in serious contact. By 'class-cultural struggle' is meant a struggle in the production of cultural or cultural-political identity. If literature is indeed a vehicle of cultural self-representation, the 'Indian cultural identity' projected by Indo-Anglian fiction, and, more obliquely, poetry, can give a little more than a hint of the 'Indias' fragmentarily represented in the many Indian literatures." Spivak, "Feminism in Decolonization," 142.

[60] Example: "It seems particularly unfortunate when the emergent perspective of feminist criticism reproduces the axioms of imperialism. A basically isolationist admiration for the literature of the female

This leads me directly to the name which Spivak gives to the legacy of efficient, neo-colonial information retrieval: the "new orientalism." Edward Said's famous *Orientalism* (1978) discussed the construction of an object of study by Western academics in the human sciences: the 'native', 'colonial', or 'imperial subject'. Spivak's "new orientalism" describes the parallel construction emerging from the neo-colonial production of knowledge. Even before she was using the orientalist lexicon to describe this, she nevertheless defined the same problem as a "ethnocentric and reverse-ethnocentric benevolent double bind" which proceeds by "considering the 'native' as object for enthusiastic information retrieval and thus denying its own 'worlding'."[61] In a more recent direct and blistering sentence that falls hard on the North American bibliographic apparatus, she characterises the new orientalism as follows: "the margin being constituted to suit the institutional convenience of the colonizer" (PV, 223).[62] I have already given some examples from Spivak of this institutional convenience. Others include: relying exclusively on translations or English material (English as imperial language sanctions ignorance), thinking in crude analogies between the internal and external neo-colonial spheres (including notions of multi-culturalism which derive from the banal manifestations of North American ethnic enclaves), failing to acknowledge our own privilege and to unlearn it as our loss (see *PCC*, 30, 42, 56-57), and finally, among others, taking received systems of representation (classification, communication, explanation, etc.) as adequate universals for the assimilation of all knowledge (and other such presumptions of cultural supremacy/centrality). We must instead seriously "negotiate between nationalism (uni- or multicultural) and globality."[63]

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subject in Europe and Anglo-American establishes the high feminist norm. It is supported and operated by an information-retrieval approach to 'Third World' literature which often employs a deliberately 'nontheoretical' methodology with self-conscious rectitude." Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," 243. This problem is also discussed at length, in a slightly different context, in "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

[61] Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," 245.

[62] See also "The Making of Americans, 791-94.

[63] Spivak, "The Making of Americans," 792.

Spivak's work is often attacked at the level of strategy by feminists, multiculturalist activists, and internationalists. Her answers usually involve two arguments: first, that she is engaged in auto-critique, the critique of something she herself finds useful and potentially emancipatory but which is dangerous if considered sufficient or closed; second, that "it is necessary to assert even this rather pathetic kind of multiculturalism in order to put some sort of platform against the white majority racist argument that humanities education . . . should be devoted to a study of whatever Western culture is" ("Neocolonialism," 227). She critiques in the interest of vigilance, warning, and the future. In this same line of argument, Spivak encounters the sentiment that 'one must begin somewhere'. To this she has answered:

> 'One must begin somewhere' is a different sentiment when expressed by the unorganized oppressed and when expressed by the beneficiary of the consolidated disciplinary structure of a central neo-colonialist power. . . . If the 'somewhere' that one begins from is the privileged site of a neo-colonial educational system, in an institute for the training of teachers, funded by the state, does that gesture of convenience not become the normative point of departure? Does not participation in such a privileged and authoritative apparatus require the greatest vigilance? (PV, 223-24)

* * *

Decolonization does require a change in the practice of scholarship and education, and in the provision of bibliographic support for these projects. Day-to-day production in the teaching machine requires a certain amount of information retrieval teaching; it is necessary and inevitable. The Other place cannot always be inhabited by students or teachers; they are not the objects of that pedagogy but its subjects and thus placed in the position of investigators. In reading or teaching this retrieved material, especially in the First World, one is never transparent as an investigating, retrieving subject, and one is always in 'compromising' positions. Cultural politics enters into everything whether or not it is taught or factored into all evaluations, all decisions. The others, the objects and their social production, cannot be *easy*, are never familiar, which means unlearning the privilege that allows us in the metropolis to retrieve and survey the world and construct it without effort. Critical educational work makes clear the investments of the academy in neo-colonial knowledge production as the cultural politics which sanction and perpetrate the exploitation of the majority of the world's women.

> Considering the role of telecommunication in entrenching the international division of labor *and* the oppression of women, this free spirit [of liberalism in the literary academy] should subject its unbridled passion for subsidizing computerized information retrieval and theoretical production to the same conscientious scrutiny. (*IOW*, 167)

This means not just accepting what gets pumped in and out of the academic/disciplinary communication apparatus, much less by commercial publishers and indexers, and never yielding to the temptation to 'settle for' or choose carelessly among those texts. One must know what is at stake. Re-read, search, work hard, know one's privilege, unlearn it, re-learn to speak, aware the way one's knowledge and desire is being structured by one's complicity, by the conditions of representability that make lives manageable. Scholarship is in need not only of information but also decolonization and transformation. The presumption of cultural supremacy and the 'object-ness' of others cannot be broken without new terms and materials. Finding them will go beyond institutional convenience, will require self-teaching, a moratorium on reproducing the canon, the old disciplinary knowledge, on explanations, on solutions, scrutiny of disciplinary knowledge-legitimation, certification, validation, and communication.

Spivak recalls the Canadian aboriginal playwright Drew Taylor showing the way:

> Listen, if you do it after so much homework, not just information-gathering but learning, not just knowing--there is a difference between learning and knowing, knowing about the workings of the internal combustion engine is not the same thing as learning to drive. So if you do it . . . in such a way that we can really talk to you, then there is no problem. But if you just talk about doing it in this nice superficial way so that people can say you are also interested in the Third World, then you will get nothing. It's not *easier* to do than other kinds of work. That is something that is very important because this is completely different from a chromatist argument--you have to be the right colour, a nativist argument, you have to be from the place--it just says either you do it as carefully as you do you own work or don't do it. ("Neocolonialism," 228)

In short, new communication systems are needed, including a new North American bibliographic apparatus, with new notions of accessibility; I can no longer rely on neo-colonial ones. This depends on new systems of representation, persistent attention to *representability* within those apparatuses and how to represent; I can no longer rely on ones like the Library of Congress. New questions about strategic exclusions, the violences of representation and knowledge production, the production of value, and labouring for the future are needed in academic librarianship. Thus, the stage is set for an anti-pluralist, decolonizing feminist librarianship.

CHAPTER IV

FEMINIST LIBRARIANSHIP AND THE CONDITIONS OF REPRESENTABILITY

> Among the most poorly indexed topics searched were father-daughter incest, date rape, marital rape, and wife beating. All but date rape had a considerable literature, but each was buried. . . . Ironically, the incest search yielded the record for an article attacking both health professionals and the general community for denying or covering up the presence of father-daughter incest through the use of obscurantist terminology. Indexers, it appears, are equally guilty.
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> --Suzanne Hildenbrand, "Women's Studies Online"

In the preceding two chapters, I have tried to introduce five faces, histories, or narrations of academic feminism and its social relations of knowledge production and use. In "Narration 1" (ca. 1970-1985), I presented a version of the growth and institutionalisation of feminism in the academy. "Narration 2" (1980-present) briefly took up the critique of that feminism and how it complicates reading feminist and other texts in the interest of an emergent "third wave" feminism. With "Narration 3" (1980-1990) I attempted to demonstrate as simply as possible the epistemic dynamism, multidimensionality, and institutional position of academic feminist knowledge production, a demonstration which was set in motion by the first two narrations. "Narration 3" ended with the critical extension and intension of the academic feminisms confronting academic librarianship's pretension of reading and representation.

"Narration 4" (1970-1990) narrowed the impossibly broad overview of chapter two by briefly reviewing some of what might be called, not too inaccurately, feminist literary studies in English. I attempted to show how the critique of literary studies proceeds from a feminist standpoint. Accessible, received texts, histories, values, and reading methods are interrupted by new, previously inaccessible texts, histories, values, and readings. In addition, hegemonic pluralism and its exclusions are made visible by anti-pluralist critique. In "Narration 5" (1979-present), information retrieval and knowledge production itself within (feminist) literary studies are (auto)critiqued and brought to crisis by "feminism in decolonization" and by "wild" academic practices.

These feminist scholars bring traditional, mystified concepts of *representation* to serious crisis through critique. Feminist librarianship in the service of literary studies and other human sciences recognises its social and institutional responsibility in taking these lessons seriously. The goal is not only to serve feminists' academic work; it is also and more importantly to do justice to the knowledge they produce, to represent it, and to make accessible, thereby actively fostering the emancipatory, transformational potential of that work. It accomplishes this by *transforming the numerous and constant decisions surrounding librarianship's representing and accessing practices into moments of persistent critique*. In so doing, it makes its social practices and the objects and relations of those practices *unheimlich* by way of a mode of immanent critique and concretion (structural-genetic understanding).[1] This critique opens the way to a realisation of feminist library work as a transformation tendency in librarianship. The rest of this thesis is an exploration of this theme.

Counter-(Op)Position

This chapter attempts to engage the question of bibliographic organisation in North American academic libraries from a feminist perspective. According to *Harrod's Librarians' Glossary*, bibliographic organisation includes "the creation, development, organisation, management and exploitation of records prepared firstly to describe items held in libraries or on databases, and secondly to facilitate user access to such items."[2] The violent, appropriational vocabulary of this definition is symptomatic of the field and indicates serious problems which undermine it even as a point of departure. However, it is the best one currently available within the discipline, and it is within this disciplinary discussion that a critical/dialectical procedure begins.

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[1] See Henri Lefebvre's discussion of Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt* approach in his Forward to *Critique of Everyday Life, Volume 1: Introduction*, trans. John Moore (London: Verso, 1991), 21 and *passim*; see also Spivak, "Feminism in Decolonization," 140; and H. T. Wilson, *Marx's Critical/Dialectical Procedure*, 89-90.

[2] *Harrod's Librarians' Glossary*, 6th ed., s.v. "bibliographic control."

Here I will discuss one aspect of bibliographic organisation, that is, issues surrounding the general theory of document classification. Document classification theory is currently concerned with developing and putting in place the systematic representational protocols which enable document classifiers to classify and users to take a "subject approach" or a "classified approach" to books and other documents.[3] These protocols take some preferred characteristic(s) of subject likeness and unlikeness (relations) as points of departure for the sorting of documents into groups (classes, collocation) presumed to be helpful in contextual finding. These classes are described in a controlled vocabulary and are, in general classifications, assigned notation, both of which are intended to express the subjects of the documents placed in the class and their relations with documents in other classes. Without classification, such an approach is impossible.[4]

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[3] For basic elucidations of these approaches, see Henry Evelyn Bliss, *The Organization of Knowledge in Libraries and the Subject-Approach to Books*, 2d ed. (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1939), 14-15; Charles Ammi Cutter, "Library Catalogues," in *Charles Ammi Cutter: Library Systematizer*, ed. Francis L. Miksa (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1977), 178-79; A. C. Foskett, *The Subject Approach to Information*, 4th ed. (Hamden, CT: Linnett Books, 1982); and *PLC*, DB091-31.

[4] In addition, the last century has seen the development of a set of 'principles' or 'canons' of classification deduced from current purposes and methods. The edifice of modern library classification depends upon these for its operation. I accept these as articulated by Ranganathan in *PLC*, parts E, G, and J. But the general definition of classification remains problematic. Ranganathan devotes a long section of *PLC* to defining classification; see CA-CP. But his definition does not allow any system to exclude notation. Often the product of the labours of the classificationist depends on the definition of classification which began the effort. Thus, the definition is an irreducibly theoretical statement. The definition of classification has also been confused by the practices of classifying in North America, where subject analysis and classification are separated, the latter being reduced to a processing device (see section below, sub verbo "Classified in America"). I do not accept this partition, though no doubt my efforts to avoid it are not entirely successful. I try to go beyond it by defining classification theory as any theory of systematic representation for retrieval. *Systematic* introduces a problematic term. Though classification must be systematic, representation need not, perhaps should not, be. Librarianship has adopted systematic representation (classification) as a helpful medium of exchange. Here I assume that, in dialectical fashion, it must be realised in order to be transcended. As I shall attempt to show, I also believe that this is task toward which transformational feminist work in classification tends at this moment in history. But in a real sense, "systematic" introduces my irreducible margin, the necessary exclusion which allows my explanation to operate.

To orient my specific project here, I refer the reader to Figure 1 (p. 125).[5] Neelameghan and Maitra helpfully diagram the relationships among the various fields which in North America are variously called classification, indexing, subject analysis, and organisation of information. In chapters two and three, I have briefly sketched some aspects of academic feminism in general and feminist literary studies in particular in terms of the theory and sociology of knowledge, the structure and development of the universe of subjects, and the analysis of discourses/subjects, work in the "idea plane," which I have called "reading."[6] This work "forms the basis" and "feedback" loop which set the conditions under which theories of classification are developed, evaluated, and practised. In the current chapter, I will attempt to explicitly connect my rough sketch of feminist literary studies with the general theories of document classification in the interest of moving (however slightly) the limits of representability in the North American academic library. At issue is how feminist developments in the universe of subjects Literary Studies relate to current models of classification and whether or not current models "crack" or "burst" in this revolution (see *PLC*, XG1-2). In short, can any extant models of classification accommodate and answer to the lessons and the requirements of academic feminism?

What are these lessons and requirements? I argue that, from the evidence presented in the previous chapters concerning the practices and theoretical productions of feminist literary studies, their work demands that any theory of classification take into account its membership in the contradictory, dynamic socio-economic formation

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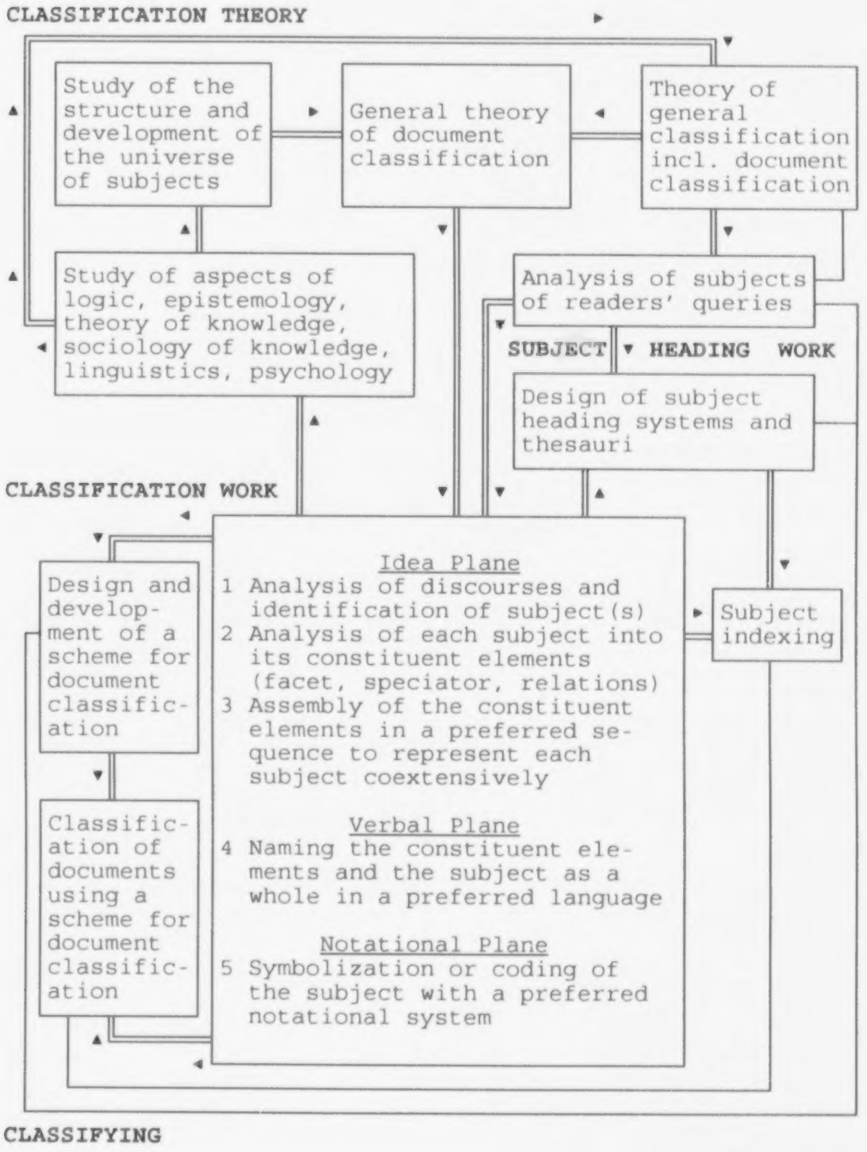
[5] Adapted from A. Neelameghan and Ranjita Maitra, *Non-Hierarchical Associative Relationships Among Concepts: Identification and Typology*, International Federation for Documentation Committee on Classification Research (FID/CR) Report, no. 18 (Bangalore: Documentation Research and Training Centre, 1978), 15. The structure of the diagram is derived from analytico-synthetic classification theory, which forms the basis of most classification theory today. I have somewhat sullied the beauty of the original figure by adding a primary basis association between work in the idea plane and the theory of knowledge, etc. But by doing this, I portray what I take to be the reflexive, circular, materialist, and *a posteriori* aspects of classification theory. This operates as a serious critique of Ranganathan's conception of science and of the postulational method (see *PLC*, RA, X). See Bernard P. Frohmann, "An Investigation of the Semantic Bases of Some Theoretical Principles of Classification Proposed by Austin and the CRG," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1983): 11-27.

[6] For an introduction to the three planes of work vocabulary, see *PLC*, Part M.

Figure 1. Interrelations Among Discourse/Subject Analysis, Classification, Subject Heading Work and Indexing, Thesaurus Building, etc. in information retrieval system design. Double lines indicate primary basis/feedback associations; arrows indicate direction of the basis association; single lines indicate secondary associations.


CLASSIFICATION THEORY
Study of the structure and development of the universe of subjects
General theory of document classification
Theory of general classification incl. document classification
Study of aspects of logic, epistemology, theory of knowledge, sociology of knowledge, linguistics, psychology
Analysis of subjects of readers' queries
SUBJECT HEADING WORK
Design of subject heading systems and thesauri
CLASSIFICATION WORK
Design and development of a scheme for document classification
Idea Plane
1 Analysis of discourses and identification of subject(s)
2 Analysis of each subject into its constituent elements (facet, speciator, relations)
3 Assembly of the constituent elements in a preferred sequence to represent each subject coextensively
Verbal Plane
4 Naming the constituent elements and the subject as a whole in a preferred language
Notational Plane
5 Symbolization or coding of the subject with a preferred notational system
Subject indexing
Classification of documents using a scheme for document classification
CLASSIFYING

characterised by advanced capitalism and patriarchy. It must take into account emancipatory theories of knowledge production and use. The following interrelated principles (discussed in order of increasing concreteness) undertake to move a feminist classification theory in these directions.

Persistent (Auto)Critique (critical-oppositional thesis; based on chapter 2, "Narration 1"): Academic feminism has grown at a phenomenal rate in terms of ideas, publications, language, conceptual relations, institutions, and so on. Yet it has an ambivalent, self-critical, and political relationship with its 'success', that is, its own historical process of definition, codification, commodification, canonization, and disciplinisation (e.g., Women's Studies) and institutionalisation in the academy, in society, and in its own discourse.

Difference/Perspectivity (sociality of knowledge production/use, micro-thesis; chapter 2, "Narration 2"): In fact, some academic feminists have resisted institutionalisation by asserting feminism's difference from itself. The subject 'academic feminism' subsumes many distinctly different needs, interests, goals, representations, histories, identities, locations, depths and levels of radicalisation, social and material relations, theoretical stances, strategies, and political stances. It also submerges real, consequential conflicts. Some of these differences may be seen in terms of the multiple struggles of which they form a part: struggle against racial oppression, class struggle (relation to the means of socio-economic production), struggle for sexual freedom, or struggle against neo-colonialism; they may also be viewed in terms of their relation to the narrow means of knowledge production (the academy and the disciplines), to the bibliographic apparatus, or to the information retrieval apparatus. These differences may (or may not) be striving together in the interest of an emergent "third wave" feminism. But they carry the potential of crucial, determinate, irreducible standpoints which demand with unprecedented force of anti-pluralist critique that these perspectives be truly represented, indeed central, in the academy and in the discourse of feminism. The irreducibility of the margin and violence of representation makes this impossible in the end. However, this realisation marks the beginning of an anti-pluralist classification theory and is a pre-condition for pushing the conditions of representability in an emancipatory direction.

Anti-Canonicity (sociality of knowledge production/use, intermediate thesis; chapter 3, "Narration 4"): Documents and subjects (including their meanings or "aboutness" and "relevance") are constituted by their systematic relationships to other documents and subjects (and the users which animate them) which occur in the socially and historically situated acts of reading, use, citation, classification, and so on.[7] Moreover, traditional disciplines (and classifications based therein) are constituted by and provide catachrestical *mystified canonical relationships* (e.g., supposedly 'natural' canonical literary histories, categories, names, conceptual relationships, methods of reading, certification, and legitimation) both *within* and *without*. These constitutive relations are written in terms of identities and (more-or-less violent) exclusions. They are conditions and effects of capitalistic and traditional social-scientific/academic notions of division of labour, objectification of knowledge, value and the separation of the cultural and the economic, and, among other things, explanations as sanctions for the socio-economic and gender hierarchy. *Reproducing them and, on the other hand, challenging them are activities with unavoidable, irreducible ethico-political significance.* The canonical relations are challenged and changed by new feminist-provided, open-ended, potentially emancipatory, radically inclusive, associative, but still oppositional relationships, knowledge, theories, practices, histories, and texts which, within the old canonical relations, can only be excluded through (mis)representational appropriation. This includes attempts to accommodate through pluralistic-appropriative strategies. Furthermore, reproducing the canonical relations cannot be rationalised with reference to their mere 'existence' or the 'impracticality' of change.

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[7] This has been argued in classification theory by Frohmann (commenting on the work of the Classification Research Group (CRG)--Austin, Mills, Vickery, et al.): "If library classification cannot in principle be divorced from facet analysis, then one reason for their inseparability may be that the concept relations sought by facet analysis are not those for which the concept relations expressed in the literature provide evidence, but rather that the two kinds of relation are identical. If the concept relations expressed in the literature constitute those displayed [*a posteriori*] in the facet analysis, then literature's concept organizaton has a fundamental theoretical significance." Frohmann, "An Investigation," 16. Also by Clare Beghtol, "Bibliographic Classification Theory and Text Linguistics." She also recognises "tradition" (what I am calling the canon) as a powerful determinant of aboutness analysis. However, she underestimates the extent to which inter-textual relations are *constitutive*.

Sociality of Texts (sociality of knowledge production/use, macro-thesis; chapter 3, "Narration 4"): Gender, race, and class--among other determinations within sociality, but these prominently--are consequential for the reading of texts; they are consequential for both reader and text. More basically, reader and text must be made visible or topical in the reading, comprehending, classifying, representing, retrieval process.[8] Furthermore, neither texts nor readers are transparent or unitary. They are, in a significant sense, socially and historically located, interested, inter-textual, and not identical with themselves. At present, emancipatory reading may even require resisting the text and taking control of the reading process.

Transformation (transformational thesis; chapter 2, "Narration 3"; chapter 3, "Narration 5"): Over their whole spectrum, academic feminisms demonstrate epistemic dynamism (sometimes with reference to "paradigm change," rarely incommensurability[9]), epistemic relativity (sometimes with reference to anti-foundationalism or non-correspondentiality or non-identitarianism), and an awareness of the gendered social practices (relations and qualities in motion) productive of knowledge and power (sometimes with reference to social constructionism or contextualism). At the least, knowledge cannot be said to be unitary. Therefore, feminists are interested in *transforming* (in addition to innovating and integrating) the practices and knowledge. At the present time, this means exploring post-disciplinary possibilities for knowledge production, a refusal of the self-marginalising label of interdisciplinarity, and making knowledge in the traditional disciplines available for different (mis)users/uses ("use for difference"), interruption through critique, and productive crisis.

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[8] This is recognised by Beghtol in a general way within her notion of extra-textual "frame knowledge" (ibid., 89 and *passim*). But she ignores significant dimensions of it by, first, excluding "meaning" from her theory of aboutness analysis (in the interest of finding a "relatively fixed and stable" or "intrinsic" aboutness (85-86)) and, second, by not recognising the specificity of these social relations, the power and value differentials they express, and thus their ethico-political significance in the social whole of which they are a part. I will return to her work below.

[9] After Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), chaps. 6-13. In feminist philosophy of science, this has been discussed under the name 'successor science'.

Decolonization (sociality of knowledge production/use, crisis/margin thesis; chapter 3, "Narration 5"): The problem of cultural representation of Third (and Fourth) World women and their texts pushes information retrieval specialists and their systems beyond the conceivable limits of representability. Nonetheless, feminism in decolonization demands that the problem be addressed at the same time as it complicates it. An easy multiculturalism or worse, an open perpetuation of a "new orientalism" in the interest of North American neo-colonialism as in current 'reform' of extant classification systems, is no solution. Working for a decolonization of classification in the interest of retrieving information about Third World women *and* decolonizing the metropolitan *Geist* would be a place at which to aim.

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These are the theoretical results of preliminary work in the idea plane in feminist literary studies in English.[10] The principles can form the basis for discussions, developments, and evaluations of theories of general classification, general theories of document classification, and work in the verbal plane (and perhaps thesaural work). At the same time, it can provide material for the study of knowledge production and developments in the universe of subjects.

Before going on to show how this can be so, I must reiterate that while this chapter's argument is irreducibly theoretical, aimed as it is at concretion from the social conditions and manifestations of the knowledge production of academic feminists, it is (1) normed by the practice of North American academic librarianship and (2) itself an embedded, embodied member of the particular social existence it seeks to investigate. For any reader living elsewhere or at another time, these facts will be painfully obvious. As for (1), the concerns of the chapter reflect a certain portion of the debate about classification amongst North American academic librarians. It depends upon that particular and limited set of conceptual, technical, and economic resources and values even where it finds them wanting. As for the second recognition

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[10] The principles appear separately as Appendix C.

(2), I fall prey to my own critique in crucial ways. No doubt the discussion will seem (and be) remote from the immediate needs of many women. Its proposed way of viewing the world may, in fact, delay the satisfaction of those needs, appropriate them, or silence their expression in my own limiting quest for explanatory closure. However, with this in mind, I also attempt to remain an underlabourer within a community of labourers for socialist feminism. My hope is that this is NOT the last word nor even a decisive word but rather one act of resistance, a night-blow struck against the gendered violence of the enslaving coding of value which gives us all its name.

Classified in America

My survey of the field of classification in the North American library communities reveals that the two main categories of analysis are "practical" and "realistic." It is clear that the *status quo* is both of these things. These terms are ubiquitous, exhaustive, and normative. In fact, it is difficult in library literature and in front of convention audiences to mention "theory." Even such visionaries as the late Hugh Atkinson, former director of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library, feel compelled to introduce conferences/books on the subject with the following accustomed leap from "classification" to the "two systems" obstruction, repeated *ad nauseam* in any such discussion:

> When we talk about classification in the U.S. library world, we do not mean Bliss or Ranganathan or some of the fancier schemes. In the United States [and Canada] there are really only two classification systems in general use, plus some that are homemade. The information contained in this chapter should be interpreted in the light of those two classification systems, not in terms of such radical schemes as Colon classification or even the Universal Decimal Classification, which is so popular in Europe.[11]

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[11] Hugh C. Atkinson, "Classification in an Unclassified World," in *Classification of Library Materials*, ed. Betty G. Bengtson and Janet Swan Hill (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1990), 1. This book is a good introduction to the current state of "classification" in North America, and my brief analysis may be said to be based on its contents. The selection of work I discuss cannot be said to be 'brilliant', 'leading', innovative, or fasionable. But it is 'typical' in the sense that its terms and assumptions are entirely comprehensible,

Yet, the authors of *Classification of Library Materials* (here taken as typical, as noted) concede that classification in North America means "*mark and park*," that is, a mere processing device.[12] Here we begin to see the fraught contradiction within classification in North America. Within two paragraphs of the statement quoted above, Atkinson says both of the following:

> Pauline Atherton . . . and Karen Markey have made a fairly cogent argument that the Library of Congress is not truly a classification system. . . . Nevertheless, we will consider it a classification scheme. (2)

> Yet both Dewey and the ever popular alternative provided by the Library of Congress are far from absurdities. They are necessities. (2)

Atkinson ends his quite engaging paper with this 'thought':

> As an administrator, I do not believe that it is an appropriate role for librarians to redo the classification numbers already formulated by those classifying materials at the Library of Congress, but I do believe that it is an appropriate role for the professional librarian who is originally classifying material, whether at a local library or at a national one, to classify all material as completely and as accurately as possible. It is also appropriate to insist upon accurate and complete classification at all levels of librarianship. (14)

Inasmuch as any sense can be made of this, it appear to be the old "keep your eyes on your work" syndrome, or perhaps I should call it "mind your own bloody business" of American social and political theory. In any case, it is symptomatic of the contradiction which arises out of the commodification and fetishisation (and related negative virtuality) of the process and product of classifying.[13] The primary

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shared, natural, and even clever to much of its intended audience. Moreover, it reflects the conditions of unreflexive practice. Thus I take it as an object of critique in order to reveal those conditions.

[12] E.g., *Classification of Library Materials*, ed. Bengtson and Swan Hill, 21, 43, and *passim.*

[13] See discussion above, Chapter 2, sub "The Burden of Books" and "Reading Academic Librarianship Reading." A guide for this section of the thesis is Adorno's comment: "Etwas vom dem Widerspruch zwischen den neuzeitlichem Emanzipation des kritischen Geistes und seiner gleichzeitigen Dämpfung ist gesamtbürgerlich: von einer frühen Phase an mußte das Bürgertum fürchten, die Konsequenz seiner eigenen Prinzipien könne über seine eigene Interessenlage hinaustreiben." Theodor W. Adorno, "Kritik (1969)," chap. in *Kritik: Kleine Schriften zur Gesellschaft*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), 12.

manifestation of the contradiction is the mystification of the status quo through the rigid distinction between realistic/practical "practice" and 'fancy' and 'central' (that is, 'seminal' or 'basic' and thus academic matter:) "theory," even as the latter grows.

How does this ideological process work? Let me quote another example at length, this time from one of the more prolific writers on subject analysis in North America:

> Before I ramble too far down the road to wherever I'm going, I want to make abundantly clear that I will be talking entirely about the code specifically in relation to LC subject headings. LC is, after all, the most used and most important subject access system in the world. To focus on some nonexistent, generic subject system would, I feel, be counterproductive. I'm not interested in concocting, baking, and serving up some big theoretical pie in the sky that has no real relevance to our present subject access environment. You will find that although I will be referring to philosophical and theoretical concepts throughout my presentation, I am first and foremost a pragmatist. I will be dealing exclusively with concepts, but also with what I believe to be workable. I emphasize that last word, "workable."[14]

Here is a classic elaboration of bellicose theory in the name of no-theory. After making it abundantly clear that he will confine himself to the status quo, he immediately turns on anyone who would take another approach, silencing through preemptive accusation. No wants to be guilty of "cooking up a scheme," here in the sense usual reserved for con-artists. Finally, Studwell places himself firmly in the position of authority: though he is as capable as the next person of doing "theory," he is an honourable pragmatist, concerned with making things "work." Throughout the paragraph, the listeners face a barrage of heavily coded terms: "most used," "most important," "counterproductive," "relevance," and "workable." Though of course, they are all contestable (and contested in other contexts), here they serve to code the proper terrain of the librarian and the proper place of "theory": aggressive *apologia* for the naturalness and totalisation of the empirical, un-transcendable status quo.

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[14] William E. Studwell, "The Subject Heading Code: Do We Have One? Do We Need One?" *Technicalities* 10, no. 10 (October 1990): 10. It should surprise no one that the author ends his sermon by comparing himself to Martin Luther, the great "reformer" (15). Yet even this pitiful absurdity yields a telling insight, as he names himself "local parish priest" cum "bold proclaimer," the Library of Congress "Catholic Church," and *his* defiance "one of the great moments of history."

This theory cum ideology operates by defining the field of classification theory narrowly.[15] While it claims to accept the 'artificiality' (non-identity of thought and reality) of its constructions (theories, schedules, etc.), it allows work to go on by treating the real relations of that work as *outside* its proper purview (or simply reifies them). Thus, it treats as "natural" or empirically identical the 'real', the workable, need, use, professionalism, 'natural language', the disciplinary divisions of labour, and instrumental and appropriational production values for library, for information retrieval, classifying, and the academy. This ignorance is the thing which enable Studwell and his audience to refuse thought, including reflection on grounds, such as theories of knowledge.

The question that cannot be asked within this discourse is, of course, precisely that of grounds: what engine is producing the predications of these values and what determinations are sustaining and compelling them and structuring their evolution. The engine/Subject is, of course, advanced capitalist society. This is the society in which the work takes place, in which it is embedded and embodied. Little understanding is allowed of the ways in which that Society and its form of patriarchy structure and determine and in turn are sanctioned by the producers and contents of that work, that is, the real relations of the production. In other words, the real Subject or, as it is called in classification theory, the "warrant" of classification, is Society, the dialectical relationship with which gives rise to the form and mode of the work of classificationist and classifier.[16] As I have argued above, their production, what is worth (*wert*) producing, is the commodified reading endowed with negative virtuality. Its warrant is unavailable for critique or discussion within the classification "theory" in North America.

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[15] Though I do not agree with her analysis on all points (or even very many), I am adopting the minimal definition of ideology proposed by Michèle Barrett in her recent book, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991): "discursive and significatory mechanisms that may occlude, legitimate, naturalise or universalise in a variety of different ways but can all be said to mystify. . . . It refers to a process of mystification, or misrepresentation, whatever its dynamic" (167).

[16] This is what Clare Beghtol has called "cultural warrant," of which all other kinds of warrants are "detailed case studies." "Semantic Validity: Concepts of Warrant in Bibliographic Classification Systems," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 30 (April/June 1986): 121. However, Beghtol's correct notion of cultural warrant is also lacking because: (1) her empiricism prevents her from seeing the real ethico-political significance of this warrant and thus leaves it immune from critique; (2) thus, she naturalises the relationship between classification systems and culture; and relatedly (3) her focus on *systems* makes invisible the

In the klieg lights of the international arena of classification theory, where arguments such as Studwell's appear as foot-stomping by a large and dangerous child, the mystification I am discussing takes on more ominous forms. Here the Subject begins to peek through, as one must fall back on other explanations for the refusal of thought. Robert P. Holley has provided us with a most revealing article where, when it is read against itself, the "cultural warrant" for classification in North America, the theory of no-theory, becomes available for critique. Holley presented the essay, "Classification in the USA," at the 51st IFLA General Conference (20 August 1985) and published it the following year in *International Classification*.[17]

According to Holley, understanding classification in the USA depends on explaining "the American way" (73). The salient "factors" in the American way of classification are: (1) "mistrust" of the access provided in the dictionary catalogue and subsequent extensive browsing (73); (2) "a common cultural unity" and institutional uniformity in the USA (74, 75); (3) a refusal of the gate-keeping function (74); (4) "literary warrant" (74); (5) removal from "day-to-day life" of patrons (75); (6) trust in verbal access (75-76); (7) hope for a technological "solution" (76); and (8) "reclassification is no longer a *prudent* use of resources" (76; my emphasis).

The bedrock of Holley's argument is (2) the "common cultural unity." Here he is trying to account for the "present degree of uniformity" (73). He begins by observing: "In principle, almost all libraries have the theoretical possibility of choosing whatever classification scheme they wish." And yet, this puzzling uniformity. The author finds his ex-planation deep "within the American character." First, "in addition to a common language, the United States has *a common cultural unity*. . . . The very

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ideologies under which such modes of semantic validity are intelligible and defensible.

[17] Robert P. Holley, "Classification in the USA," *International Classification* 13, no. 2 (1986): 73-786. Subsequent page references in the text.

American centered bias of our classification schemes helped to shut out competitors from abroad" (74; my emphasis); that is, Americans need only one classification system because we are all the same, see things in the same way, speak the same language (in the deep sense). Holley also asserts that this deep unity carries over into the academy where American research libraries have substantially the same collections among themselves and with the Library of Congress, and that LCC organises these collections "in a way understandable to American scholars" (75). Those excluded from the cultural unity of the white, male bourgeoisie, their books, and their disciplinary division of labour may have reason to doubt its commonality. But no doubt Holley's view sanctions the ignorance and violence of the uniformity.

Holley goes on to give more compelling reasons for the uniformity: the merely "theoretical" freedom to choose, which, in the usual manner of the freedoms under liberal capitalism, obscures the deeper prohibition against its exercise: the iron fist of capitalist economy, which here goes under the name "pragmatism" (as Marx said of the proletarian, "free and rightless" [*frei und vogelfrei*] practice[18]). Of course, this means, first of all, reducing to a minimum the amount of time-as-money-consuming-but-unproductive-of-exchange-or-surplus-value intellectual work, which is enabled by buying (abstract) labour from the Library of Congress. But Holley points out something more basic: *interchangeability*. He cites an illustration of what he means:

> Americans believed in standardization since the introduction of interchangeable parts by Eli Whitney. I remember reading an essay which contended that the similar arrangement of our fast food restaurants and convenience grocery stores all across the United States contributed strongly to our sense of national unity. (78 n. 6)

Holley argues that this is "the patron-centered philosophy" that dictates that the method-of-use in one library be interchangeable with the method in all other libraries. But he underestimates (and diminishes) the power of his own argument. In a brilliantly unaffected fashion, national unity/uniformity here is being posited as a by-product of

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[18] Marx, *Capital*, I, 876, 925.

the maximization of the conditions of exchange and thus the circulation of its product and medium. Effecting this maximization requires, as in the case of McDonalds or 7-Eleven, that (abstract) labour tend toward interchangeability and that the commodity tend toward interchangeability, so that the price of the commodity is reduced. Further, this has nothing whatever to do with the "patron." Rather, the *consumer* becomes merely a means of conveyance for the medium of circulation through the moment of the exchange, which is now a 'free' exchange between the consumer and the producer of the virtualised commodity. Finally, the conditions of exchange themselves must tend toward the abstract, where any unpredicted variability (variation from the predicted movement of the categories) is eliminated. Thus the whole mechanism of fetishised relations may be finely tuned for maximum *quantity* and *efficiency*; these are the final court of appeal. When applied to classification, this is a crucial moment in the inexorable internal development of the virtual information commodity. And, as the work of feminist library researchers and others shows, this process of "open capitulation . . . as agents of the minimization of their own expense of production" is well under way.[19]

This inexorable process is indeed one of the primary forces behind national and international uniformity in advanced capitalist societies. It is certainly the cultural warrant for the uninterrupted progress of the process of which I am speaking, reproduction of the status quo, and simultaneous disappearance of alternatives and resistance. Within that narrative reclassification is, indeed, "no longer a *prudent* use of resources" (76; my emphasis). However, in the narrative above written in the interest of critique, resistance becomes possible and an ethico-political imperative.

Within the vehement theory of 'realistic' no-theory and uniformity, the unease which reveals the contradiction and the possibility of opposition is visible. In Holley, it reveals itself in the desperate defense of the 'freedom' to acquiesce (like the one-party election). In Studwell, it reveals itself as the preemptive refusal of thought and of responsibility during and in the very discussion of the necessity of change, however limited and senseless. Indeed, some version of 'reform' is now part of standard professional baggage. The current growth of the spirit of reform and the simultaneous occlusion of reflection on grounds is perhaps the most striking aspect of the contradiction. In part, this is fuelled by the criticism of the institutional status quo by feminist librarians and their allies (e.g., the National Council for Research on Women, Sanford Berman), who attempt to keep alive some other coding of value. I will discuss that work in the next section. In addition, the literature on the weaknesses of the Library of Congress schemes (both LCSH and LCC) is large, generally recognised, and uncomfortable. But for now, I note another source of interruption, that is, the work of some classification/indexing theorists in North America (e.g., Clare Beghtol, the cognitive school). Though most of their work is certainly not critical, it can sometimes carry the impact of *Verfremdungseffekt*. For example, Beghtol's major theoretical paper "Bibliographic Classification Theory and Text Linguistics" carries within it some considerable resources for oppositional work in classification theory. I quote two passages which I take to be crucial:

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[19] The quote comes from Spivak, *IOW*, 109; Roma Harris's *Librarianship* shows the process of capitulation in librarianship.

> The aboutness of the actual classification text (i.e. the world of knowledge it seeks to organise) and the frame knowledge (e.g. classification tradition) needed for its comprehension and use take precedence over the aboutness of the primary document and the frame knowledge needed for its comprehension. (101)
>
> The primary document may be seen as a *passive recipient* of active analytic treatment by a classification system that may ironically (for to do this well is its stated purpose) be unable to deal adequately with the document's macropropositional aboutness. (102; my emphasis)

These sound theoretical statements, based on a good deal of empirical work in text linguistics, forcefully summarise the case for classification theory and reclassification.[20] As argued above, it is primarily the mystification of the status quo which keeps intact the rigid separation of theory and practice and codes advances such as Beghtol's as "some big theoretical pie in the sky."[21]

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[20] In fact, Beghtol's theories have been substantially confirmed by at least on study; see Irmeli Hovi, "The Cognitive Structure of Classification Work," in *Information, Knowledge, Evolution: Proceedings of the forty-fourth FID (Fédération Internationale d'Information et de Documentation) Congress held in Helsinki, Finland,*

One could understand such responses to the immanent contradiction as the emergence of the regulative mechanisms of crisis management. And, as with most crises, an important aspect of this developing one is the more overt policing practices. These practices define the (narrow) ground on which reforms can be understood and, at the same time, stand in the way of reform. Some of its forms are: standardisation, copy, control and surveillance, administrative practices, official techno-utopianism, and transparency. I will discuss each briefly in turn. Here I do not intend to document these phenomena, but rather to present them, as 'common knowledge' and categories in current librarianship, in a new light.

A. Standardisation: While standardisation in bibliographic work arises from a quite real need for consistency in collocation and description, the particular form that it has taken in North American librarianship is that of blind conformity: 'we must all do the same thing'. Thus, standardisation comes to be identical with 'the blind leading the blind'. Local deviations of practice from the norm of the North American Library System are usually viewed as 'irresponsible', though occasionally they take on the appeal of the exotic. A few, such as those of Sanford Berman, become legendary.[22] Yet even these take place strictly within and according to the 'realities' of the status quo, including the database structures and information retrieval systems.

B. Copy: According to a recent and representative survey conducted in California and reported by Elizabeth Dickinson Nichols, 86.8 percent of respondents

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28 August-1 September 1988, ed. Sinikki Koskiala and Ritva Launo, FID Publication 675 (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science, 1989), 121-32.

[21] As I briefly mentioned in Chapter 1, the history of modern librarianship reveals the roots of this phenomenon, for example, in progressivism, technocracy (politics-economics-technology matrix; see Spivak, *IOW*, 282-83 nn. 8-10), and masculism.

[22] Atkinson, in the paper cited, calls Berman one "of those prophets who wander through the pages of the Old Testament proclaiming the truth so accurately and so irritatingly that the rest of us, while recognizing the validity of the message, which they would just go away and stop demanding such difficult reforms." Atkinson, "Classification," 7.

accept some or all class numbers on cataloguing copy provided by the Library of Congress. In addition, 88.9 percent of Library of Congress copy contained "usable" class numbers.[23] Staffing levels and qualifications, budgets, and theoretical orientations have completely institutionalised these practices. Any reform which requires more local effort in processing is automatically rejected without consideration. The spirit of "co-operative" cataloguing gives way to the law of neo-Fordist efficiencies and blind reproduction, an important mechanism of commodity fetishism.

C. Control and Surveillance: As with standardisation, the requirement for 'authority control' becomes surveillance and enforcement in the labour process itself. Current cataloguing systems (e.g., Innovative Interfaces) furnish instant notification to the manager of deviations from institutionally mandated practices.

D. Administrative Practices: Academic libraries are usually organised in ways which reify the academic division of labour reproduced in the LCC. Collections are developed and evaluated according to LCC classes, and collections budgets are divided accordingly.[24] Frequently, large academic libraries with several buildings divide their collections along LCC class lines. Staff, including specialised librarians, and tasks are assigned accordingly.

E. Official Techno-Utopianism: The official unease is complimented and 'resolved' by official technological utopianism, in which all current problems will be solved in the coming golden age (millennium?) of computerised classification practice/theory. Examples could be found anywhere and proliferate *ad infinitum*. One quotation will suffice:

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[23] Elizabeth Dickinson Nichols, "Classification Decision-Making in California," in *Classification of Library Materials*, ed. Bengtson and Swan Hill, 152-53. Hope Olson reiterates what too many librarians seem to have forgotten: "Virtually no library using widely accepted controlled vocabularies such as LCSH relies entirely on original cataloging. Most library cataloging data comes from a shared source such as a bibliographic utility. Therefore, good subject access depends not only upon the standard system (LCSH), but also on the quality of cataloging copy contributed." Hope Olson, "Subject Access to Women's Studies Materials," in *Cataloging Heresy: Challenging the Standard Bibliographic Product, Proceedings of the Congress for Librarians at Jamaica, New York, 18 February 1991*, ed. Bella Hass Weinberg (Medford, NJ: Learned Information, 1992), 165.

[24] For example, Susan Searing has argued that "where the classification system doubles as the framework for decisions about acquisitions, the traditional discipline-based knowledge structure is reinforced." Susan E. Searing, "How Libraries Cope with Interdisciplinarity: The Case of Women's Studies," *Issues in Integrative Studies* 10 (1992): 17.

> The emergence of online public access to bibliographic records means that we can look forward to a synthesis of the two types of catalog. In the manual environment no library could afford to provide two types of catalog so that the user could search using alphabetical subject headings and/or class numbers. In the machine environment the ability to search the database by a variety of subject search keys must inevitably bring about the removal of terms such as *classed catalog* and *dictionary catalog* from the vocabulary, and therefore the minds, of librarians and patrons.[25]

This official optimism is the surrogate for real change and vigilant attention to oppositional critique. (This is Holley's (7).)

F. Transparency: This is the most difficult mechanism of mystification and policing to grasp but, in light of efforts at reform, the most important. Most information retrieval systems and their interfaces are currently constructed to preserve the illusion of the freedom of the user. The classification itself, the structure of the database, and the warrants upon which it is based are *rendered invisible*. The system shows a 'result' which is the product of some hidden process. There are a number of things at work here: (1) a manifestation of the desire for *unmediated* presence and access through such devices as post-coordinated, 'natural-language', keyword searching (Holley's (6) read against itself); (2) the removal from librarians' active consciousness of their gate-keeping functions (mediation), the problem of representation, and the current levels of representational violence, and thus a refusal of institutional responsibility, explicit decision-making, discussion of grounds, and critical thought on these difficulties (Holley's (3) read against itself); (3) the removal from users' active consciousness and practice of the structures which determine their 'free' search for knowledge, and thus a more or less effective prohibition of critical discussion of these issues outside the community of professionally-sanctioned discussion (Holley's (5) read against itself); and an effect, (4) indirect control of 'information overload' through *invisible* occlusion.

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[25] Russell Sweeney, "The Atlantic Divide: Classification Outside the United States," in *Classification of Library Materials*, ed. Bengtson and Swan Hill, 50.

* * *

This section (with the final section of chapter two) has been an exploration of the socio-economic grounds for the North American ideology of classification, the ideology itself, and its effective regulative mechanisms. I have followed this procedure because any other would fall below its intended object; that is, the current practice of classification in North America is *beneath* all critique.

I have not explicitly touched on (though it is implied) the cultural supremacy warrant that is an integral part of classification theory in North America. This sanction and reproductive mechanism for neo-colonial knowledge production becomes increasingly dangerous as the Dewey Decimal Classification becomes "the world's bibliographic classification."[26] But in a sense, this omission reveals the truth of my method of presentation to the discipline of classification in North America. For my point has been that *the question of general grounds cannot be asked within classification theory in North America*. This is why the six criteria for a feminist classification theory developed in the first section of this chapter (or any other theoretical work or school in classification) simply did not, can not, arise here. In fact, among academic librarians, who work in institutions which, over the last thirty years have switched into lock-step with the Library of Congress, even questions such as the non-question of enumerative classification theory, of which LCC is the main legitimising agent, are inaudible.

The ideology and its socio-economic grounds are the most intractable foes faced by feminist librarians attempting to think oppositionally about classification theory. Indeed, feminist librarians proposing to reflect on *general* grounds exclude themselves from any debate concerning change (usually micro-reformism conceived strictly under dominant logic). As I shall attempt to show, these librarians have either simply been drawn into the vortex of reformism within the ideology or searched out paths of less resistance, such as setting up separate and parallel institutions or channelling their energies into relatively open fields, such as indexing.

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[26] John P. Comaromi, "Dewey Decimal Classification: History and Continuing Development," in *Classification of Library Materials*, ed. Bengtson and Swan Hill, 58.

"Add Women and Stir": Review and Critique

Classification theory cannot hide forever its liberal commitment to advanced capitalism and the reproduction of patriarchal social relations. The raised consciousness among feminist librarians of the historical and structured society in which we live ensures that at least one of the two commitments would be recognised. In so doing, it rescues classification from being merely the praxiology of systematic representation under advanced capitalism and patriarchy.

This section is based on twenty-three works published or tabled by feminist librarians between 1977 and 1992 inclusive. They are listed in Appendix A. I do not claim exhaustiveness for the list, but it does include some of the most prominent of the feminist librarians, such as Sarah Pritchard, Suzanne Hildenbrand, and Susan Searing. Many of the authors are identified as Women's Studies librarians in academic libraries. As stated in chapter one, I take as a point of departure Hildenbrand's comment, that "greater experience with women's materials, and heightened consciousness have both shown traditional library practices to be frequently inappropriate to the needs of women's collections."[27] One of those practices is classification.

The study of classification by feminist librarians takes place within society. The task of critique is to reveal its dynamic constituency and its internal contradiction. This procedure yields the insight that feminist librarianship shows the way to a reflection on grounds by arguing *unsuccessfully* that the irreducibly gendered/oppressive status quo can be overcome by some measure of reform, that is, undertaken within the currently hegemonic practice/theory, ideology, or predication of classification in libraries.

Let me be clear how I conceive this work in terms of classification theory. Work in the verbal plane, which goes on every day in libraries (e.g., in reference inquiries), leads to obstructions when dealing with women's materials. The search for the source of these obstructions yields some insights on the idea plane and for theory. Usually, such work in the idea plane does not occur in libraries, for the reasons stated in the second section of this chapter, among others. So this work is not translated into theoretical work, but rather feeds back into revisions on the verbal plane or in subject heading work. I argue that such attempts ultimately fail to comprehend the true nature of the obstructions. However, unlike the usual pre-critical level of classification work, they illuminate the obstructions and leave unresolved insights which open the way to work on the general theory of classification.

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[27] Hildenbrand, Introduction to *Women's Collections*, 5. For a vivid account of this, see Edith Maureen Fisher, "Women of Color: Observations About Library Access," *Ethnic Forum* 6 (1986): 117-27.

On the surface, the works may be divided into the following non-exclusive categories according to their object: (1) Library of Congress (count: 11); (2) information retrieval of women's materials and women's studies (6); (3) alternative access to women's materials in the verbal plane (3); and (4) "information organisation" (4). The first and second take essentially the same objects, the second merely analysing databases other than that of the Congressional library. However, I include it as a separate category because it seems to broaden the field of critical/oppositional possibilities. I speculate that this is so because these other databases are not part of librarians' everyday life (in Lefebvre's sense); they are clearly outside of and thus in a sense strange to the everyday world of the Library System and its mystifications, significantly including the academic division of labour. This means that (2) might be used as a critical interruption of (1). But more importantly, commercial indexing holds considerably more potential for surplus-value extraction and thus, classification theory becomes worth doing (*wert getan zu werden*). This fact necessitates vigilance.

Library of Congress

Any discussion of feminist librarians' criticism of the Library of Congress (LC) must begin in the middle 1970s with Joan Marshall's *On Equal Terms*.[28] The front matter to this thesaurus is a *tour de force*, furnishing the foundation for all subsequent developments. The oppositional tone and practice of the document testifies to the 1974 confrontation between the Library and the Committee on Sexism in Subject Headings of the ALA SRRT Task Force on Women. LC's intransigence led to a rare decision to oppose rather than accommodate on the part of the Committee. They made this decision because of two crucial theoretical recognitions: (1) LC is "tied to its catalog" rather than to "validity" (vii) which I take to mean that it is operating according to a different coding of value, namely, a capitalistic and neo-colonial one; and (2) the Committee "recognized that the problem of bias in the LCSH is much broader than sex bias, and that what was needed was a reevaluation of the principles used in establishing LCSH subject headings rather than a band-aid solution to its sex bias" (vii).

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[28] Joan K. Marshall, *On Equal Terms: A Thesaurus for Nonsexist Indexing and Cataloging* (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1977). Page references are in the text.

Marshall's preface is followed by a now famous essay, "Sexism and Language." Here Marshall establishes the link between linguistics and feminist librarians' efforts in the verbal plane and thesauri that has served as the *raison d'être* for most of the works I am discussing. She convincingly documents violations of the Canon of Exhaustiveness (the "generic Man" problem and its correlates; *PLC*, EM). Perhaps more importantly, she argues that librarians have a responsibility to struggle against this problem: "Language supports the cultural norm: man is active, woman is passive. . . . If we believe that language supports cultural norms which we reject, we must work consciously toward bringing that change about" (4). This recognition of the ethico-political significance of library practices stands as the most compelling aspect of Marshall's work. It suggests for librarianship the issue of social reproduction in the Marxist sense and in the debate about the literary canon.[29]

A final theoretical insight follows in the background to the "Principles for Establishing Subject Headings Relating to People and Peoples." Here the Committee recognises that LC's classification theory is substantially predicated upon "the construction of a hypothetical reader" which is "American/Western European,

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[29] The *locus classicus* is Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, chap. 23; for a brief feminist introduction, see Susan Himmelweit, "Reproduction," in *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, 2d ed., ed. Bottomore, 469-71. On the ethico-political significance of the literary canon, see above Chapter 3, "Narration 4."

Christian, white, hetero-sexual, and male" (6). The effect of this creation is described as follows:

> The attempt to identify a single reader, and therefore the creation of a hypothetical norm, has resulted in subject descriptors which serve some and disserve or underserve many. Subject descriptors must reflect the multiplicity of points of view that our users hold. The objection to subject headings reflecting a multiplicity of viewpoints--the reader's expectations concerning access will not be met--is not valid. Which reader's expectations? (6)

Here the Committee raises the fundamental theoretical issue of the identity of "the reader." For whom is a classification constructed? It is discussed by all classification theorists; for example, Ranganathan explicitly addresses it in *PLC*, EP and WB (see especially WB13-WB4). The revelation of the LC reader's national, religious, racial, sexual, and gender identities is one of the significant achievements of feminist librarianship.

On the other hand, the recognition of the problem of the "minority" reader and the call for a "multiplicity of viewpoints" is hardly news. In fact, it is here that I detect the ideology of classification at work. The ignorance of classification theory and the lack of any serious consideration of the need for a fundamental re-orientation in general theory, a need which cries out from the work and principles of the Committee itself, lead the Committee to turn back toward LC and confine its applications to the subject heading work of that particular institutional theory/practice. In other words, while starting out from the position that the situation required a "reevaluation of the principles" rather than a "band-aid" solution, the work ends in the latter after outlining the basis for the former in a devastating critique. Questions of enumerative classification theory and the problem of verbal access alone cannot arise. This effect is so typical of the approach of feminist librarians to LC that I can only call it symptomatic or paradigmatic. The new "Principles" proposed by the Committee, upon which their thesaurus is based, become then merely a critique of LC's *application* of Hulme's theory of "literary warrant," albeit an overwhelming one. Specifically, the Committee raised the issue of whose discourse would warrant the selection of names in the verbal plane and in subject heading work. The question of the vacuity of the theoretical defense from literary warrant did not arise.[30]

LC classification practice/theory continued to generate obstacles and difficulties for feminist librarians throughout the 1980s. Their criticisms took place within a general context of dissatisfaction with LC from some quarters, including those influential in the 'technical' services community (e.g., Studwell).[31] Edith Maureen Fisher carefully documented the problems faced by women of colour using the subject approach to their own books. She argued: "Access for monographs [and periodicals] on 'women of color' is oftentimes baffling, frustrating, and seemingly impossible."[32] In 1988, the National Women's Studies Association charged LC with perpetrating the invisibility of women and other groups through language and of "rob[bing] learners of crucial information and diminish[ing] the complex reality of our world." The resolution the Association sent to the Library included suggestions for changes and additions to the subject heading list.[33]

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[30] While this statement is to a large extent true of the substance of the "Principles," it is not entirely fair to their spirit. They do contain significant contributions to the interpretation of the canons of Consistent Succession, Exhaustiveness, Currency, and others. More important is the counter-position of "validity" or "authenticity" (7) (including cultural self-representation and decolonization) as warrant to Hulme's "literary warrant" defended by LC. Once again, my position is that the Committee's position cannot be sustained within the theory/practice which underwrites LC practice/theory. I take this up below under "Alternative Access." Largely due to the work of feminist librarians, the old theory of literary warrant, with its assumptions of the ability of books to unsystematically self-classify and the priority of the commodified products of the national bibliographic apparatus/book trade in subject definition and naming, is no longer seriously defensible. The term has survived in a newer usage (quite alien to Hulme and LC) as a critical point of departure (conceptual analysis of existing literature) and a check. The theory was first expounded by E. Wyndham Hulme, "Principles of Book Classification," *Library Association Record* 13 (1911): 354-58, 389-94, 444-49; *Library Association Record* 14 (1912): 39-46, 174-81, 216-21. For a recent comment, see Beghtol, "Semantic Validity," 111-14. Ranganathan's idea of work in the idea plane supersedes Hulme's theory by putting it in its place.

[31] See, for example, *Report of the Racism and Sexism in Subject Analysis Subcommittee to the RTSD/CCS Subject Analysis Committee*, Report presented at the Midwinter 1980 meeting of the American Library Association, by Elizabeth M. Dickinson, Chairperson, ERIC, ED 192730; Sanford Berman, ed. *Subject Cataloging: Critiques and Innovations* (New York: Haworth Press, 1984); A. C. Foskett, "Better Dead Than Read: Further Studies in Critical Classification," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 28 (October/December 1984): 346-59.

[32] Fisher, "Women of Color," 119.

[33] National Women's Studies Association, "NWSA Resolution," in *Alternative Library Literature: A Biennial Anthology, 1988/89*, ed. Sanford Berman and James P. Danky (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1990), 22.

In the same year, Sarah Pritchard, in her review of machine-readable resources for Women's Studies, asked the question: has the availability of copy cataloguing for feminist literature improved access? Pritchard does not directly answer the question (why not?). She concedes that "biases and omissions embodied in subject terminology" continue to provide problems. Beyond this, she makes an interesting point about the computerisation of library catalogues: "Some local systems provide greater flexibility with the capacity for free-text searching of titles, subject headings, and other cataloging data. This can, however, be misleading since book databases rarely include abstracts and subject headings may still be the same structured LC terms." This is exactly the problem of Transparency I articulated above. Note the word "may" in the final sentence. The fact is that no one knows.

The following year, Robert Mowery published an informative descriptive study of LC's classification of feminist literary studies.[34] Mowery analysed LC practice in 164 cases. He documents massive failures of collocation. For example, the books were classed in more than one hundred different classes and arrays. The subject descriptors were scattered all over the alphabetical LCSH because they contained widely various entry words. More than a third of the books had no helpful subject words. However, Mowery's article contains no theoretical reflections.

In fact, in this stream of feminist criticism of LC, I could find no theoretical advances during the 1980s over the work of Marshall and of the Committee on Sexism. But two articles published in the early 1990s bring this tradition to a close. Hope Olson's 1991 study details four difficulties LCSH has with academic feminists' books[35]: (1) it is "a reflection of a patriarchal society," by which she means it contains sexist language and assumptions (160); (2) LCSH fails to enumerate or precoordinate interdisciplinary topics, such as feminist approach to traditional subjects;

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[34] Robert L. Mowery, "Women in Literature: A Study of Library of Congress Subject Cataloging," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (1989): 89-99.

[35] Olson, "Subject Access." Page references are in the text. Though this paper no longer reflects Prof. Olson's thinking, in the context of this thesis it is a crucial document in the development of the feminist approach to LCSH.

(3) "feminist research orientations do not fit into [LCSH] categories designed for traditional research" (160), which for Olson raises problems of specificity (maximal intension), currency, and lack of links and other representational devices for conceptual relationships; and (4) LC "does not always fully exploit its own subject heading list" and "does not always follow its own principle of specific entry" (165, 166).

Olson's analysis incorporates significant theoretical advances over the insights of Marshall. In particular, it moves beyond the basic insights of "Sexism and Language" (Olson's first category) to a recognition of the fundamental problem of conceptual relationships within compound and complex subjects. On several occasions in the course of the argument, a critique of LC's four theoretical pillars threatens to break through.[36] For example, while discussing LC's weaknesses on the feminist research orientation "women-centered topics," Olson says: "Some other means of indexing is required to not only link interdisciplinary concepts, but to convey the nature of the relationships between the concepts" (163). On the following page, she similarly ends her discussion of the integration of feminist knowledge into the disciplines by noting of LCSH: "Concepts cannot be linked and the relationships between them *cannot be represented*" (164; my emphasis). Finally, under a brief discussion of LC's treatment of new feminist theories, she states: "The presence of both the personal and the political in an unabashed manner is beyond the scope of LCSH" (165).

With these fundamental problems, and with the acknowledgement that these problems are doing damage to feminist academic work (164), one would expect an answer to the question 'why?' these things cannot be represented. But the question is not addressed. On the other hand, of course, the reasons that the question is not broached are probably more enlightening than would have been any suggested answer.

First, Olson's paper displays a marked ambivalence toward the great American Library. Even while formulating careful arguments for its inadequacy, in at least three places she defends its practices, including its interest in not representing what she calls "deconstruction."[37] More to the point, Olson noticeably (even obtrusively) attempts to give LC the benefit of the doubt.

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[36] The four pillars of LC are: (1) economy, (2) literary warrant, (3) enumeration, and (4) subject approach on the verbal plane. As I have argued above, (1) takes precedence over the others to such a degree that the latter three are merely a form of theoretical damage control.

> LCSH has a history of revision which has shown a laudable effort to keep up with current concepts. Mainstream society and hierarchical institutions, however, do not necessarily reflect the culture and concerns of disadvantaged groups. While the Library of Congress has made significant efforts to remedy this situation (such as the massive changes of the "Women as . . ." headings), the task is not yet complete. (160)

The interesting thing to note here is that the "massive changes" for which LC is here given credit took place *before* the publication of Marshall's celebrated thesaurus--in 1974, in fact. More significant still is that Olson's own recommendations have exact analogues in Marshall's and the Committee's, as endorsed by the American Library Association sixteen years before.[38] It appears that, the goodwill of the Library's staff notwithstanding, something else is at work here. This 'something else' is what is operating Olson's ambivalence and LC's intransigence. It is precisely that first determinant of LC's practice, its capitalistic and neo-colonial predication of value. This is not available for critique here because it is in fact shared: "The library community must decide whether or not this and other socially responsible changes would be worth the investment" (167). That this question of value is introduced *within* the LC-defined domain reveals nothing if not social justice and representation itself in hock to institutional inertia, labour process regulation, and commodified readings. If these values are not opposed, classification theory cannot justify its existence in North America.

Second, an analysis of Olson's problem (4)--LC application of its own tools--

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[37] This is what Beghtol calls "differential relevance" and what I call Anti-Canonicity. It has much in common with critique. Beghtol, "Bibliographic Classification Theory and Text Linguistics," 103.

[38] Olson's recommendation 1 "LC follow its own principles" (p. 166) = Committee's Principle 4 and Principle 5 (Marshall, pp. 8-9); Olson 2 "free-floating subdivision" = Committee's first topical subdivision "feminist perspective" (p. 13); Olson 3 "review" = Marshall's review of LC files, conducted in 1975, which led directly to the production of the thesaurus (p. viii); Olson 4 "risk-taking" = Committee's Principle 6 (pp. 9-10).

yields a further insight into the neglect of classification theory (the Committee on Sexism also indicted LC in this manner). These are genuine problems when they occur in any classification scheme, but they not primarily errors of practice or application, as Olson seems to imply. They are rather indicative of problems at the level of theory which require theoretical reflection. For example, the subjects make no attempt to satisfy the canons of Exclusiveness, Exhaustiveness, or Concomitance (*PLC*, EM, EN, EH). This means that the classifier, with an alphabetical enumeration nearly five thousand pages in length (LCSH), will prefer the first solution that presents itself. When books are superficially known, the classifier's frame knowledge is shallow at best, and when the schedule of terms provides little or no denotative or relational help (whether it be in accordance with the canon of Context, Enumeration, or Modulation (*PLC*, GB, GC, ET)), the classifier has no basis on which to prefer one non-exhaustive, non-exclusive term to another (except for her/his overdetermined "frame knowledge" or acculturation). This is in addition to the problem of comprehending five thousand pages of terms and phrases and knowing where to turn first. Specificity presents the same sorts of problems. It seems clear that specificity on all planes is currently desirable, but without context in verbal plane or modulation in idea plane, specific terms are no more helpful or meaningful than general, and in some cases considerably less helpful.

It might be objected that LCSH is not a classification scheme and is thus not open to these criticisms. This is not entirely true. Because LC functions with no systematic link between subject heading work and either the theory of classification or classification work in the idea and verbal planes, LCSH serves as a de facto classificatory language. Indeed, in all but the most tortured sense, it is LC's sole mechanism of subject collocation. This is what makes it possible and even demands that Olson and others treat it as if the application of LCSH were an act of classifying. But more importantly, classification work in the verbal plane and subject heading/thesaural work depend upon the same developments in theory and the idea plane and thus have something like a relationship to each other; in fact, they are aspects of the human, social act of classifying and share its attendant problems.[39] The severance of these two interdependent aspects of classification work is itself an aspect of the theoretical problem. Ultimately, then, the objection only serves to strengthen my argument, that is, that the problems of LC are not primarily problems of application but rather problems of theory.

Thus, these problems cannot be solved within the parameters of the theoretical pillars of LC, let alone by a closer attention to their application. But once again, one comes face-to-face with the fact of the presumed central task: to get the job done, to maximize production and exchange; that is, the task is to maintain the practice/theory of LC at all costs, not to expand the conditions of representability. The real victims are, as Olson so successfully demonstrates, women's books and feminist readers.

The criticism of LC by feminist librarians reaches its conclusion with Susan Searing's recent essay "How Libraries Cope with Interdisciplinarity."[40] Searing deals LC a crushing blow by revealing the contradiction of North American classification. In this article, she deals with Women's Studies as an interdisciplinary field, that sanctioned name for otherness within the academic division of labour. First, Searing acknowledges what is at stake: academic feminists' "critical analysis of the control of information is an important strand in the evolving understanding of how patriarchy operates and is sustained over time. These large questions that feminists raise about 'gendered' knowledge and male vs. female values are concretized, but not resolved, in the library" (8). In fact, she adds, "within the walls of the library, the classification systems functions as a hegemonic representation of human knowledge" (10). Furthermore, she rightly finds the objective obstruction to change in the current predication of value: "The reality of the library budget . . . defines the scope of the catalog" (14). And she adds, "meanwhile far too much published information, particularly on cutting-edge topics, vanishes into a bibliographic void" (15). Searing concludes:

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[39] Thus, Derek Langridge says: "The alphabetical catalogue shows . . . relationships by cross-references but they must ultimately be derived from a classification system. Likewise the various classes denoted by subject headings are a product of classification; and the order of their components produces just the same problems of citation order as the components of a class number." Derek W. Langridge, *Classification: Its Kinds, Elements, Systems and Applications* (London: Bowker-Saur, 1992), 63.

[40] Searing, "How Libraries Cope." Page references are in the text.

> Can the library successfully meet the needs of interdisciplinary researchers? Not, the case of Women's Studies suggests, without revised subject terminology, more flexible classification systems, and in-depth labeling of materials.
>
> Libraries resist radical change, in part because the existing knowledge structures reinforce themselves. For example, classification systems are used to organize acquisitions functions, which in turn generate new holdings to be cataloged into the established classifications. Changes in library knowledge structures tend to be reformist (e.g., updating subject headings) rather than revolutionary (e.g., creating a nonhierarchical classification system). (22-23)

This is the clearest statement so far of the contradiction of the current situation. The contradiction appears in the writings of a feminist librarian because it is here that the dynamic social whole in which it participates is most visible. Searing presents us with academic librarianship's complicity in the reproduction of that oppressive sociality.

This recent essay is all the more striking because of Searing's own response to this complicity both here and in her previous works. Throughout her writings, Searing exemplifies what above she calls "reformist" work and in another place *resignation*.[41] In fact, she has openly opposed change under the names "the practical librarian" and "pragmatist."[42] Far from being a friend of existing systems, though, Searing has always favoured "communicating the intricacies of the system to library users, . . . promoting more sophisticated research methods than browsing, and . . . alerting users to implicit values in the systems."[43] Though this work is tactically brilliant, it becomes dangerous when it refuses, as it does in Searing's writings, to confront the institutional responsibility of academic librarianship, including gate-keeping and representation generally. The coexistence of open acknowledgement and open refusal marks the contradiction of academic librarianship. It calls a halt to nearly twenty years of reformist criticism.

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[41] Searing, "How Libraries Cope," 10.

[42] Susan E. Searing, "Response," *Feminist Collections* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1987): 12-13. In another article published at approximately the same date, she is even more explicit: "For sound reasons of *efficiency* and *standardization*, we will rarely modify a Library of Congress record. Yet LC practice, though improving, still leaves much to be desired. . . . As librarians, we know better than anyone how imperfect our catalogs are. And I wouldn't dream of suggesting (as some *naive* but well-meaning faculty members have suggested to me) that you should just go back and 'do it over right'. Yet I do hope you'll keep the problem of subject access . . . firmly in mind." Susan E. Searing, "Fighting Sexism in the Stacks: The Library Response to Women's Studies," *MPLA Newsletter* 32, no. 3 (December 1987): 4; my emphasis.

[43] Searing, "How Libraries Cope," 10-11. Searing's published work reflects this orientation--encouraging

Information Retrieval (IR)

There are three articles to deal with here, all influential papers not least because they provided much of the foundation for the work discussed in the next section (*A Women's Thesaurus*). I will discuss them in the order of their publication.

Ellen Gay Detlefsen's essay "Issues of Access to Information About Women" set the agenda for subsequent work in this area.[44] She pointed out four problems presented by women's materials for pre-critical IR systems: (1) "Material about women is not necessarily the same as feminist material or women's studies material" (163). Here she distinguishes not only among works of various perspectives relative to feminism, but also among levels of oppositional consciousness or radicalisation within the latter. The exact point she is trying to make here is unclear, but in general she argues that these characteristics are consequential for classification (and also for publication patterns and access); (2) "interdisciplinary approaches to women's information or feminist information are necessary" (163); (3) "massive terminology and vocabulary problems are present when working with either women's or feminist information sources" (163). In addition those problems of language raised above, she notes the related problem that "terms understood in common parlance and used by indexers and searchers are still too broad and imprecise to allow for targetted

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circumvention of the Library System even as the work of the profession daily reproduces it--to which I will return below in the final section of the chapter, "Negotiating the Structures of Violence." For now, I will cite her well-known publications in this vein: Susan E. Searing, *Introduction to Library Research in Women's Studies* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985); Catherine Loeb, Susan E. Searing, and Esther Stineman, *Women's Studies: A Recommended Core Bibliography, 1980-1985* (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1987).

[44] Ellen Gay Detlefsen, "Issues of Access to Information About Women," *Special Collections* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 163-71; reprinted in *Women's Collections*, 163-71.

searching" (166). This point has theoretical significance for the verbal plane; that is, natural language does not unproblematically transform itself into a classificatory one; and, less relevant here, (4) "coverage of women's studies journals and feminist periodicals is sparse at best, and non-existent in most traditional indexing and abstracting services" (167).

Sarah Pritchard's "Developing Criteria for Database Evaluation" takes Detlefsen's influential criticisms as a point of departure.[45] At the outset she states that her purpose is provide the foundations for "new systems of access" (248), which must include, as I am arguing, new conditions of representability. I want to make four points about this paper: its method; its criteria for women's studies; the guidelines themselves as they relate to classification; and, finally, the reported reactions to testing the guidelines.

In many ways, Pritchard's method is exemplary. She appropriates in detail the materials of librarianship and information science on database evaluation. She establishes explicit criteria which arise from women's studies, from which she enacts a 'marriage' of the two sources in her guidelines. Pritchard herself describes this as a tailoring process (254). Two problems arise from this method, however, which are later inevitably duplicated in the guidelines. First, if these guidelines are intended to be critical of traditional guidelines for database evaluation, the criticism is almost invisibly implicit. In fact, the feminist criteria are presented as *additions* to traditional criteria and in no way alter them; that is, they merely enhance them. Any critical force the criteria might have for librarianship and information science is diffused as follows: "It is clear that these [feminist] values are also close to long-standing values of librarianship" (254). Who is Pritchard reassuring?

Second, the method allows Pritchard to de-politicise the guidelines though a 'disciplinary' tactic; that is, presenting the "women's studies criteria" as the usual *special disciplinary* case for the application of *prior general* evaluation criteria. This contribution to the disciplinisation of "women's studies," an approach embraced all too often by women's studies librarians, has ethico-political significance, such as in silencing feminist critique of the academic division of labour, disallowing critical confrontation with the canonical disciplines and the professions (including librarianship as here), and ignoring feminism's oppositional difference from itself.[46]

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[45] Sarah M. Pritchard, "Developing Criteria for Database Evaluation: The Example of Women's Studies," *The Reference Librarian*, no. 11 (Fall/Winter 1984): 247-61; reprinted in *Evaluation of Reference Services*, ed. Bill Katz and Ruth A. Fraley (New York: Haworth Press, 1984), 247-61.

Both of these methodological tactics follow from an assumption about the role of feminism in the academy. Pritchard seems to believe that that role is restricted to innovation, adding something new to the growing tree of knowledge; in this case, adding some new criteria to old ones and adding a new discipline. In this light, it becomes notable that Pritchard spends seven pages developing the evaluation model, including sixteen citations, while spending one page elaborating feminist criteria, including no citations. The devaluation of feminist work in the idea plane, this presumption that feminism requires no such hard work, allows this (whose?) liberal version of feminism to emerge. More oppositional, transformational stances, which might complicate the picture, are ignored. This leaves intact not only the previous evaluation categories and the disciplines, but also, in the guidelines, the telecommunications apparatus, database design, and classification/indexing theory. In light of the purpose of these guidelines, that is, "database critiques" to underwrite grant proposals for new computerized IR services for women's studies (248), the method seems strangely accommodating.

This reveals the obstruction to change in feminist librarians' discourse on IR. Unreflexive practice leads to a sanctioned ignorance of the uncritical role the librarian is playing here by *embodying and being embodied by* oppressive social relations both in/by the academy and the communication apparatus. Here the systems secrete this unwitting complicity, this forgetfulness of agency, by invoking the accustomed powerlessness to choose. Categories constitutive of a 'good', 'valuable' database are decided previously and elsewhere. The composition of the academy is supposed to be always decided elsewhere. The question of what is productive of the power to choose (money) cannot be asked. Of course, all this also fetishises the virtual information commodity, making critique all the more necessary.

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[46] "Feminist disciplinarization . . . , in the interest of a homogeneous, hegemonic practice, seeks to rein in voices that speak in contrary ways, from other places, or from another imaginary field." Alice A. Parker and Elizabeth A. Meese, Introduction to *Feminist Critical Negotiations*, ed. Alice A. Parker and Elizabeth A. Meese (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992), viii.

Nevertheless, though in general they suffer from the limited attention to feminism, some of these criteria represent important feminist principles for database design and development, which reveal the shackling of the Library System proper (perhaps in part because we are more attentive 'consumers' than producers). If taken seriously, they could significantly alter the conditions of representability. They include (254): attention to considerations of gender and language; awareness of "the exclusion of women's ideas from traditional sources"; representation of all women, with an emphasis on marginalised women (concerns about class, race, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation); women's control of information businesses; women's control of technology; and collapsing barriers between the academy and social and political activism.

Not surprisingly, the impact of these criteria on the evaluation guidelines in the area of classification/indexing is most evident in the guidelines for "vocabulary," which are notable not individually but in their specific form here. For example, "terms representing women's experiences and issues" (III.A); currency for feminists and freedom from bias of "actual words" used (III.B.1); provision of "feminist perspective" delimiter (III.B.4). Also recognisably feminist is the constant attention in the guidelines to making those people involved in database production and use *visible*: "who selects" (I.D), "who prepares the citations and/or abstracts" (II.D), "who writes" the thesaurus (III.A), who controls production (V.E), who has access (V.E). This leads to a most notable contribution to classification theory: the explicit connections upon which Pritchard insists among gender, class, ethnicity, control of production, and availability (V.E):

> Are any of the phases of production or distribution of the information women-controlled? Does the producer/distributor's advertising or other literature demonstrate sexist attitudes? Are disadvantaged, minority, or non-privileged

> women likely to have a difficult time gaining access to the primary or secondary sources of information? (258)

Attention to these kinds of socio-political questions represents a major breakthrough for academic librarianship, one that few others have achieved elsewhere or even noticed here. Though one may object to the latent 'essentialist' faith in the emancipatory potential of women's control of production, this look beyond the technical specification of empirical regularities presented for comment by the status quo and the field of indexing narrowly conceived makes visible in new ways the classificationist and classifier *and their masters* (capital and professional/managerial bureaucracy), opening the way to a reflexive consideration of the real relations of IR, knowledge production and information use. On the other hand, it is indicative of the state of librarianship that beta-testers of the guidelines found this category less than crucial (259).

Finally, traces of feminist influence can be detected in other classificatory indexing criteria: classification of differential relevance ("novel perspectives," III.C); modulation and deep intension/specificity, problems already identified for feminist classification (III.E); and conceptual/contextual relationships in term structure (III.D). These are demands of classification theory which arise from feminist classification work in the idea plane. Unfortunately, they do not form the basis for system design (classification or technology) or evaluation. They function (here and elsewhere) as ideal/abstract types, not demands arising from feminist practice. This makes evaluating them in existing databases exceedingly difficult, since the real relations and structures of indexing are hidden in the desire for transparency. Pritchard acknowledges this as follows: "You can only verify this absolutely when using a test database where you know exact contents and what you should be getting" (257). These are, of course, catachrestical terms; even with test databases, one cannot know what one *should* be getting. There are other ways of making these structures visible (not available here), to which I will return below. But it is interesting to note in passing that, in librarians' "focus on whatever characteristics were easily identifiable" (259), the above classificatory indexing criteria did not show up among those deficiencies of existing databases which were identified in beta-tests of the guidelines. Yet the next study entails a conclusion quite different from the one which might be drawn from that overdetermined position.

Suzanne Hildenbrand, in her "Women's Studies Online," identifies indexing obstacles in one hundred searches of thirty-one Dialog databses for seventy-nine women's studies researchers at State University of New York-Buffalo.[47] The manifest purpose of the study was to ascertain "user satisfaction" with online IR. The purpose of writing was, as the sub-title discloses, to promote the visibility of women's interests in classificatory indexing practices.

Hildenbrand found that women's interests were rendered invisible in three ways (66-70): (1) failure to differentiate lower order classes by characteristics significant to women; (2) failure to provide "inclusive labels for records on one example of a whole class," in violation of the Canon of Context and the Canon of Enumeration in the verbal plane (*PLC*, GB, GC) and the Canon of Modulation in the idea plane (*PLC*, ET); and (3) "assignment failures" or failures of the indexers to apply the controlled vocabulary fully (including differential relevance). Hildenbrand concludes:

> Too often, the controlled vocabulary terms used by the databases either failed to suit the needs of the participants or failed to reflect adequately the literature, or both. . . . The indexing in searched files too often obscured topics and relationships of interest to the participants. Failure to recognize, and label, the women's aspect of a topic perpetuates the tradition of invisibility against which W[omen's] S[tudies] scholars struggle. (66)

Thus, Hildenbrand clearly and explicitly links classificatory failures to ethico-political effects, namely, reproduction of the oppressive status quo.

Hildenbrand's method is classically feminist. Throughout the study, she uses women's experiences pursuing emancipatory projects to reveal oppressive conditions and to criticise those conditions. One unfortunate limitation of this method as Hildenbrand uses it is that it focuses *exclusively* on narrowly empirical evidence, thus failing to give the findings social-theoretical or classificatory significance. In fact, Hildenbrand begins by attempting to minimize any distinctive theoretical significance which might be derived from the findings. She attributes the obstacles to those problems posed by the characteristics of Women's Studies, namely, activism, interdisciplinarity, and its similarities to social sciences, in which the databases are said to be generally weak (63). She thus focuses not on the conditions of visibility but on *particular* failures of representation. There is one notable exception to this: "Women's interests are often peripheral to the interests of the database producers" (71). But this recognition does not necessarily lead to further insights, but rather, as for Pritchard, a concession of powerlessness. So the question is left to the reader: Do the failures arise from the conditions of representability and from the general theory of classification in use here?

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[47] Suzanne Hildenbrand, "Women's Studies Online: Promoting Visibility," *RQ* 26 (Fall 1986): 63-74.

I am inclined to answer in the affirmative for the following reasons. With the exceptions of some suggested additions to records such as population tags, Hildenbrand emphasises extra-classificatory access such as free-text searching. Her "guidelines for more effective women's studies searches" (71-72) suggest that women's visibility quickly hits glass walls under current classification practice/theory, though care, attentiveness, and tenacity can improve it. Also, self-representation is a frequent serendipitous effect of searching abstracts. Less striking but equally significant is that the obstacles Hildenbrand's study illuminated are not readily amenable to ad hoc solutions. In fact, they seem to me to require systematic attention to the general theory of classification. For example, solutions to problems (1) and (2) demand a discussion of the cultural/semantic warrants for principles and characteristics for division, choices of subjects and facets, principles of facet sequences and syntactic relations, depth of intension, and so on. While Hildenbrand weakly suggests for librarians "a role in the promotion of improvements in the indexing" (72), she does not suggest systematic attention to classification/indexing theory. This is a trace of the contradiction of powerlessness. Its narrow attention to practice under the status quo legitimates and grants autonomy to (objectifies) the limits placed on the conditions of representation even while criticising it. It gives only the barest clues of how these limits reflect the real relations of society within which the IR is taking place.

These clues become available for critique if the self-development of this object is heeded in dialectical fashion. The authors of these three papers evaluate databases cut somewhat free from the mystifications of the North American Library System. Thus, they play a key role in interrupting the narrow explanations and solutions open to those labouring within that ideology. The obstructions and contradictions revealed in their work have a surface aspect and a deep aspect. The former is the limits of representation in existing databases. I have discussed these in terms of Detlefsen's problems, Pritchard's guidelines, and Hildenbrand's searches. The insights which arise in these (tacit and explicit) criticisms of the surface aspect are sufficient to illuminate the impasse of reformist criticism directed at LC (as discussed above). Each author raises specific problems for IR which cannot be asked by those criticising LC (enumerative inquiry language based on an existing literary warrant).

But this revelation-by-contrast conceals a deeper, more profound similarity. The immanent contradiction lies on the surface as the self-concealment of the obstruction. Let us follow the logic of this contradiction. All three authors tacitly or explicitly refer to serious problems in the limits *and* conditions of representability under the status quo. But these questions are of strangely little moment in the last analysis. The reason for this can be found embedded in their responses. All three see the limits of representation (the surface obstruction). They seem to believe that they are rejecting this limit in attempting to escape or circumvent it. But in fact each response allows the escape while hiding the deep obstruction from view, like the reflection of light off of a window's surface hits the eye and hides what is inside. Detlefsen's point five, "hint[s] at progress" (163, 167-70), serves this purpose by encouraging her to avoid facing the implications of her own work. Hildenbrand's top-eight approaches to more effective searching (71-72) steer her into the circumvention strategies favoured by Searing. And Pritchard's "new computerized services" becomes a separatist (here a disciplinary) manoeuvre that finds most comprehensive expression in the alternative access systems I discuss next. These responses have much in common with the academic separatism, including of course its operation as an alibi for business as usual at the putative centre, the source of the deep obstruction.[48]

But the heart of the matter lies not in the separatism itself but in the engine of such recourse. In fact, each of these responses are *caught* by the concealed deep obstruction, which is nonetheless evinced by the contradiction of the powerlessness which poses as escape. Powerlessness is a referential, relational term; it assumes an abject relation to a power centre. Here it refers to the relations of feminist IR within a society characterised by (women in) patriarchy, (workers in) advanced capitalism, and (the subaltern in) neo-colonialism. But while these relations are briefly referred to, they are neither recognised as decisive nor challenged; that is, they are only referred to by way of unacknowledged, final acquiescence. The deep obstruction is attended to only as it manifests itself on the surface, not as a social, structural condition of representability that it is. Such an approach ensures that these feminist librarians' criticisms of IR fail to disclose their acceptance of and commitment to the status quo. For by actually acceding to the totalisation of powerlessness in the objectification of the status quo, they conceal the fetishism of the certified virtual information commodity which ensures that the question of representability cannot be asked. This allows the work of (re)producing misrepresentations to go on and to increase its monopoly on productive power. All three authors fail to confront the momentousness of the deep obstruction, because it is hidden within that powerlessness which drives the responses away from the real object of critique. Recognising the determining relations under which this unfree transaction takes place begins to make visible what cannot be asked, said, demanded, proposed, desired, expected, and lived without opposition to, persistent critique of, and transformation of those relations.

One might object that Pritchard's separatist approach, bracketing her disciplinary manoeuvre and the concession of the centre, at the least represents a recognition of the momentousness of systemic obstructions. It is to this objection that I must now turn.[49]

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[48] As discussed in chapter 2, "Narration 1".

[49] I briefly mention one article that may indicate provocative new directions for theory. I do not give it a

Alternative Access

Undoubtedly one of the great achievements of North American feminist librarianship, *A Women's Thesaurus* (1987) epitomises the feminist practical linguistic work initiated by the ALA's Committee on Sexism in Subject Headings, the database evaluation work of Pritchard and Hildenbrand, and the professional work of Women's Studies academic librarians.[50] Two of the principal editorial advisors, Sarah Pritchard and Susan Searing, have already been discussed. The *Thesaurus* builds on their work and the work of a large number of feminist librarians and scholars. It operates within the same logic as the works discussed in the previous sub-section ("Information Retrieval") and thus may be said to be subject to some aspects of that critique. However, as mentioned, its criticism and rejection of previous classificatory schemes for "information by and about women" seems to escape the critique by acting to put in place an alternative systematic representation. But I will attempt to show that, although the *Thesaurus* takes a giant leap forward in terms of feminist thesaural and

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full discussion in the main text, because it is so anomalous. Connie Miller's exploration of IR entitled "Lesbians Online" (in *Women Online: Research in Women's Studies Using Online Databases*, ed. Steven D. Atkinson and Judith Hudson (New York: Haworth Press, 1990), 281-99) takes the twin concepts of "access" and "definition" as points of departure (based on Marilyn Frye's "Separatism and Power" from her 1983 book *The Politics of Reality*). Though she confines herself primarily to a discussion of database content/coverage, Miller's use of the concept "definition" corresponds roughly to my use of 'representation'. She says: "Lesbians who have access to information about themselves know, at least, how they are being defined. Lesbians who define the information to which they (and others) have access have the power to define themselves" (290). The most obvious point here is that these are rather unaccustomed and radical criteria for database evaluation in librarianship (to understate the case). But more than that, Miller provides the critical insight that access to self-definition is an important form of power. This applies to content as well as to the mediating systematic representation. Miller does not go beyond the mention of societal attitudes toward lesbianism in theorising the occlusion of self-definition (appropriation of definition). But she quite clearly names its effects: "Access to information that shapes lesbians' conceptions of what they ought to be and that determines, for lesbians, 'what is said and sayable' is conditional access" (298). Conditional access is perhaps even more profound under the un-representability of self-definition. Miller's approach is a hopeful step in a direction which would undoubtedly reward further analysis.

[50] Mary Ellen S. Capek, ed., *A Women's Thesaurus: An Index of Language Used to Describe and Locate Information By and About Women* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987); Mary Ellen S. Capek, "Wired Words: Developing an Online Thesaurus and Database for Improving Access to Women's Information Resources," *Women & Language* 10, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 54-55; reprinted in *Alternative Library Literature, 1986/1987: A Biennial Anthology*, ed. Sanford Berman and James P. Danky (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1988): 24-25. Former cited in the text as *WT*.

subject heading work, it scarcely begins to address the real social relations of classification/indexing work or the requirements for new conditions of representability, including those outlined above in "Counter-(Op)Position." It is far from a new system of access. On the other hand, aspects of the *Thesaurus* and its warrants make it possible to discuss classification theory on a much deeper level.

I will focus on five suppositions upon which *A Women's Thesaurus* is based: (1) current IR systems/conditions (*WT*, xiv); (2) the "problems of access were and are fundamentally problems of language"[51]; (3) the "prosaic contribution" to the realisation of the "dream of a common language" (based on Adrienne Rich's poetry collection of that title) (*WT*, viii); (4) the sufficiency of descriptive usage as a construction process for work in the verbal plane (a "list of the language . . . currently used to define women's lives and research" (*WT*, xvi); and finally (5) the self-sufficiency of thesaural or subject heading work.

Capek and the Task Force on Thesaurus Development[52] did not conceive of the *Thesaurus* as a replacement or even a challenge to existing systems of information retrieval, but rather "refinements," "correctives," and additions to "sharpen existing classification and cataloging systems" (*WT*, xiii-xiv) where "information by and about women" would be present. In fact, they "attempted to maintain compatibility with existing classification and cataloging systems," including LC. In addition, the *Thesaurus* was designed "for optimum use with electronic retrieval systems" (*WT*, xiv). This means postcoordination for "maximum efficiency." These terms are not new to this thesis. Any separatism presumed to inhere to Pritchard's "new systems of access" --whether they be for new databases, separate collections, or women's information in current databases--turns out to be more apparent than real; they are perhaps better called self-marginalising. These systems in fact look much like the old ones but with new words. Strategically this aspect of the *Thesaurus* is a crucial development. But if it is conceived as sufficient, it seriously underestimates the systemic obstructions in current IR and in current classification practices and relations. In fact, it unconditionally cedes the centre to those conditions currently working to maintain and strengthen the grasp of the status quo. This concession, which I have been critiquing to this point in the chapter as the ideology of North American classification, veils and naturalises the problems of the other four consequential pre-suppositions.[53]

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[51] Capek, "Wired Words," 24.

[52] The institutional history of *A Women's Thesaurus* appears at *WT*, xv-xvi, and Capek, "Wired Words," 24-25. It is sponsored by the National Council for Research on Women and the Business and Professional Women's Foundation. The Thesaurus Task Force was formed in October of 1982.

Contrary to Capek's assertion, then, the problems with LC and IR discussed in the articles critiqued above are not "fundamentally problems of language." If I have accomplished nothing else, I hope I have successfully lessened the appeal of this notion. Even the *surface phenomena* of the obstructions (e.g., two of Detlefsen's three IR problems and at least two of Hildenbrand's three indexing problems) are not amenable to simple terminological solutions but are rather problems of classification theory. This is not to say that there is no feminist work to be done on the verbal plane and subject headings; on the contrary, the necessity of such work is the fundamental insight of the earliest and most sustained feminist work in classification and cataloguing (e.g., the Committee on Sexism in Subject Headings). But the problems cannot be solved at the level of language merely because that is where they appear. If authors want to discuss truly *fundamental* obstacles to access to women's information, I have already argued that they will not get far without first running into political economy and the entrenched masculism and neo-colonialism of the relations of First World IR. Unfortunately, the *Thesaurus* has almost no chance of being widely implemented in the North American Library System, whatever its merits, for precisely these reasons.

Because I have already discussed the first two suppositions at length in this chapter, these are not the ones I choose to emphasise. I am interested, rather, in how they develop themselves in *A Women's Thesaurus*. The other three are secondary suppositions that raise different questions, questions more apparently internal to classification/indexing work in general and particularly to work in the verbal plane.

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[53] I have chosen not to emphasise the *Thesaurus*'s weaknesses *as a thesaurus*. But I imply some and state some others here (they are considerable and numerous, arising from the received conditions of representability, which include accepting without thought ANSI Z39.19): inconsistent division and assortment; lack of syntatical relationships beyond simple hierarchical ones; lack of exhaustiveness/coextensivity in array; lack of principles for subject definition.

Having diagnosed the problem as one of 'language', the authors of the *Thesaurus* invoke Adrienne Rich's "dream of a common language" as the guiding vision for their work. They give "common" two meanings: first, reflective, empowering, shared, communicative and classificatory self-representational, including "'reclaiming the power of naming'"; and second, standardised. They offer the second as "a prosaic contribution to the ongoing efforts to articulate that dream" (*WT*, viii). But an obvious tension exists here. The authors attempt to deal with it as follows: they admit that standardisation is "intrinsically controversial," that "any list of language has its roots in social, political, and economic perspectives," but that they "intend this process to be an opening up, not a restricting of the language. . . . to open up channels of communication . . . to document women as linguistically creative speakers and writers" (*WT*, xvi-xviii). Yet it *is* a restricting of language, and the tension between standardisation and the dream is irreducible. I agree that standardisation as mediated representation is indeed a precondition of all communication, of sociality itself. But this means that the dream (of the "common language," *l'écriture féminine*, or another), though appealing, perhaps galvanising and of theoretical importance (to feminism, psychoanalysis, socialism, etc.), is an *impossible* one, realisable only outside of history, society, and especially language. Thus, there can be no "prosaic contribution" to it. Such a move only refuses to come to terms with the irreducible violence of representation.

This has something like a relationship to the "Transparency" of current IR systems which I discussed above. The desire for unmediated representation and access through such strategies as post-coordination and 'natural-language' searching, combined with the current IR environment, hides and mystifies mediation, which in turn becomes complicit in reproducing the illusion of freedom and mastery. It removes the problem of violence, exclusion, gate-keeping, and responsibility for these tasks from librarians' and users' consciousnesses. Likewise, the desire for unmediated representation and communication in the dream of a common language becomes dangerous when conceived as a socially and historically realisable goal, as it indefinitely postpones a reflexive confrontation with the irreducible, and, indeed, a dialectical confrontation with the deep obstructions to new, less violent and less oppressive conditions of representability.

The editors of the *Thesaurus* sought to make the violence of standardisation disappear from view through "a process of consensus" of which they are justifiably proud (*WT*, xvii, ix). The process referred to here is that through which the entry terms and cross-references which appear in the *Thesaurus* were chosen, revised, and published. In constructing the list of terms for the standardised access language, the Task Force and Subject Groups endeavoured to "produce a . . . list of the language--formal and informal, vernacular and scholarly--currently used to define women's lives and research" (*WT*, xvi). Thus they aimed at a list descriptive of current usage. As Marshall and the Committee on Sexism pointed out, however, a standardised language, especially one designed for the appearance of unmediated access, appeals to the semantic warrant of a(n encultured) hypothetical reader. The question of whose current usage the list describes must be asked; no amount of consensual rhetoric can avoid the problem of this construct's identity or identities.

Three moments in the process are crucial for making visible this commitment: (1) the thirty-five lists originally combined to form the *Thesaurus*; (2) the first revision by the Subject Groups; and (3) the second round of revisions after beta-testing. The front matter to the *Thesaurus* is not totally explicit concerning the intricacies of this process. However, the list of women involved and the institutional locations of the original thirty-five lists reveals that this hypothetical reader is an elite American reader. The list of the main classes and subjects confirms this initial impression (e.g., the class "International Women"). This is not to say that the list is fatally flawed by this process; but the use of words like consensus cannot conscientiously stand in place of vigilance and a scrupulous declaration of interest.

But this calls for deeper analysis. The privileging of the reader or user arises from Transparency, the desire (and now compulsion) to provide unmediated access through 'natural-language' IR systems. Ideally, the classificatory/representational language (the "object language" in the verbal plane strictly defined; *PLC*, MB2-5) oriented toward the documents being classified/represented exactly matches that of users' enquiries. But, of course, this rarely happens except by fortuitous coincidence, for 'natural language' is nearly infinitely variable. In fact, this is one of the great difficulties of classification work in the verbal plane. A classification scheme must provide a switching mechanism between these universes of discourse (usually through the catalogue). However, in a scheme where only minimal, verbal switching is provided (through cross-references), where the object language and enquiry language are essentially conceived as one and the same, the object language must typically and predominately match that of the observed/observable users (this is, again, the semantic, ultimately cultural, warrant). If Beghtol is substantially correct that "the primary document may be seen as a passive recipient of active analytic treatment by a classification system" in the cognitive act of classifying,[54] then this implies that, where the conditions of representability match those I have described, the documentary universe is transformed and mapped according to the commitments, locations, interests, and identities of the classifiers and assumed users, here, significantly, North American academic elites. This is precisely the kind of intellectual neo-colonialism to which Gayatri Spivak objects. This is not only blatant appropriation "of the social capacity to produce a *differential*" but also a capitulation to and a refusal to acknowledge "the long-established but supple, heterogeneous and hierarchical power-lines of the institutional 'dissemination of knowledge' [which] continue to determine and overdetermine their condition of representability" (PV, 228, 221-22).

Such narrowly empirical and abstractly immediate subject heading work alone (1) acquiesces in and refuses to confront (while actively attempting to hide) the interests and locations of users and (2) acquiesces in and refuses to confront (and actively mystifies) its own commitment to and participation in the status quo in the forms of the virtual information commodity, IR systems, relations and conditions

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[54] Beghtol, "Bibliographic Classification Theory and Text Linguistics," 102.

(including classification/indexing practice/theory), and the relations of knowledge production (e.g., the academy, etc.). The critique of the supposition of the sufficiency of empirical linguistic access can be added to those criticisms of classificatory/indexing systems already provided or implied by feminist librarians. It becomes necessary, then, to provide a fuller summary statement--from the perspective of analytico-synthetic theory (AST)--of how empirical linguistic work, conceived and implemented as if sufficient under current conditions, limits representability.[55] This analysis opens the way to a negation of the negation, a consideration of immanent determinations and possibilities of moving toward pushing the limits outward and upward.

Theory. The narrowly or strictly empirical approach to language and the focus on the act of retrieval alone block any kind of systematic attention to the conditions of the IR act and to what is at stake in the theory and form used to express the product, the classificatory language. In the rush to make a list of the language as currently used, the question of what theory of general classification is needed to make 'other' women, their productions, and needs visible and "to open channels of communication to other users and other disciplines, to document women as linguistically creative speakers and writers who have been *systematically* excluded or stereotyped in virtually all previous lexicons and classification systems" is bypassed (*WT*, xvii-xviii; my emphasis). The analyses of feminist librarians and my own work on feminist literary studies shows that, if these emancipatory purposes are to be served, theories of general classification which currently hold sway must be recognised as inadequate and oppressive. So I argue that feminist classification work must go beyond words to the conditions of representability--economic, social-political, epistemic, and historical.

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[55] Why AST? It should be clear from my comments concerning AST thus far that I do not consider it the final, emancipatory answer. Far from it. On the other hand, I believe AST to contain within it necessary pre-conditions for progress in library classification (e.g., capacity for sustained attention to epistemology, sociology of knowledge, knowledge production, use, and change, semantics, etc.). As the most extensive and flexible extant theory and practice in library classification, it is historically placed to be transcended in critical/dialectical fashion. Thus, as a point of departure, I believe it retains the potential to significantly open up the conditions of representability. This is in no way to diminish its very real difficulties, including its regressive justification and the uses to which it has been put in India. For further criticisms of AST, see chapter 5, sub verbo "Analytico-Synthetic Theory and the Conditions of Representability."

Only then does the magnitude of the task and the momentousness of our own commitments become clear. With the *Thesaurus*, it is not so much the starting point that is wrong; it is rather that the outcome was predetermined elsewhere. For example, the Task Force simply accepted ANSI Z39.19[56] without asking what was at stake in that overdetermined decision (*WT*, xvi). In fact, the work cited and developed in this thesis shows that a feminist classification theory must attend to emancipatory theories of knowledge and to the sociality of knowledge production and use, including the social relations of classification work. Thus, it must provide for a scrupulous distinction between access and object languages, between subject heading/thesaural work and work in the verbal plane; it will provide for the expression of systematic conceptual relationships, both hierarchical and non-hierarchical. Ultimately, it recognises that the current conditions of representability require sustained oppositional attention and change if this feminist work in classification is to have any impact at all. It is here that the counter-(op)position would come into play.

> No theory can hold good eternally. On the other hand, great vigilance is necessary to keep abreast of the new happenings in the universe of subjects. The postulates and principles should be constantly tested against those happenings. This should be a continuous process. (*PLC*, XK5)

Idea plane. The analysis of feminist discourses must not only inform subject heading/thesaural access languages. In fact, it seems to me that it must do more than inform and feed back into general classification theory, though it certainly must do this to a much greater extent than it has been doing (as in my principles above) or than it does in *A Women's Thesaurus*.

> The concepts and the inter-relationships among them to be enumberated and expressed in a thesaurus are usually identified and selected on the basis of analysis of discourses, embodied in documents and in the queries of users, and found helpful in information search and indexing. The structuring of subjects, iether for the purpose of classifying and indexing subjects of documents or for designing a scheme for classification, involves recognizing the component concepts and the nature of the inter-relationships among them as displayed in

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[56] American National Standards Institute's protocol for thesaural structure and entry form.

> discourses. This is also helpful in the formulation of a model of subject-structure for representing subjects of documents and of users' queries, necessary for information search and retrieval. Thus, to a large extent, the work of subject analysis of discourses, identifying the component concepts and their inter-relationship, *and providing a model or framework for coextensively representing subjects*, is common and prerequisite, to classification as well as construction of a thesuarus.[57]

But it needs to do even more than identify (*a posteriori*) characteristics for division, conceptual relationships, exhaustive arrays, exclusive classes, consistent successions, modulations, speciators, isolates, and specificity; although it surely should begin to work towards these things as demanded by the criticisms of current IR by feminist librarians. But ultimately, it becomes a commitment (re-)reading, to bringing to each act of classifying a "frame knowledge" sufficient to a thorough facet analysis and a persistent critique of the relations of production and dissemination of knowledge and the document. It means resisting the current predication of value which enables the claim that the required intellectual effort and social-institutional responsibility is 'worthless' (*wertlos*).

Verbal plane. The object language provides the opportunity to refuse the illusion of Transparency and the desire for 'natural language'. Natural langauge IR is in essence IR in a vacuum in its dependence on semantically intuited, context-free (syntactically empty), stand-alone words. The enquiry language may provide for an infinite number of links and natural-language points of entry, including 'strange' links to unaccustomed or invisible discourses as well as those for differential relevance. In that work, *A Women's Thesaurus* is of inestimable value. But I suggest that the enquiry language must lead to a *visible* verbal object language adequate to feminist work in the idea plane; that is, (1) oriented toward the act of classifying documents according to their decolonized self-representation, self-development, and social and conceptual relations, and (2) providing coextensive and relational collocation and accords with the canons for idea and verbal planes (*PLC*, E, G) by way of facet analysis (facet analysis is currently the best way to construct thesauri). The canons, contrary to LCSH and other enumerative lists of language with thousands of natural-language synonyms, demand contextual definitions and the elimination of synonyms. Ultimately, the goal is to make visible the violence, the mediation, the objective limitations on representability, in a scrupulous and public declaration of interest by librarians.[58]

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[57] Neelameghan and Maitra, 3; my emphasis. See also Frohmann, "An Investigation."

Notational plane. As far as North American librarians are concerned, notation is no longer of any interest whatever. And, in fact, with the development of information technology, the idea of filiatory sequence or linear mapping is largely obsolete. Perhaps notation may be dispensed with as IR comes to depend upon freely faceted thesauri. But notation can do more than provide monothematic if helpful filiatory sequence (which, incidently, is more than it is doing now in the alphabetical scattering of North American academic libraries). I will mention four that may be helpful to feminist classification theory: (1) "the class number can be made to reflect distinguishing qualities of the blocks into which it is partitioned, if the partitioning digits can be made meaningful so as to serve as signposts or indicators of the quality of the succeeding blocks. Each block is called a Facet" (*PLC*, HB7). They can also be made to signify conceptual and other kinds of precoordinated syntactical relationships identified in the idea plane, both hierarchical and non-hierarchical. These partitioning digits can be made meaningful for users directly, but also and more importantly for the use of the IR system; (2) notation may act as an international object language, providing a crucial switching mechanism between work in the verbal plane in different languages[59]; (3) notation eliminates unhelpful alphabetical sequence both in the catalogue and in the classification schedule, contextualises homonyms, eliminates synonyms, allows changes in the verbal plane without changes in the idea plane, and so on (*PLC*, HA); and most interestingly, (4) analytico-synthetic notation allows 'spinning out' the class number into a chain and allowing IR in any part of the chain (even and especially where all the terms from the verbal plane are not present in the record), then yielding a classified outcome (see *PLC*, WB2-4). Thus, a "minority" user can use the "weak-bond end" of a facet, isolate, and so on. I will return to this in the final chapter.

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[58] For an excellent article on the relationship between subject heading work and work in the verbal plane and with a similar proposal, see Winfried Gödert and Silke Horny, "The Design of Subject Access Elements in Online Public Access Catalogs," *International Classification* 17, no. 2 (1990): 66-76.

[59] This notion, based on Ranganathan's idea of notation as the Classificatory Language of an international, do-all classification scheme, is extremely problematic. It seems to arise chiefly from his bias toward "technical" terminologies and trans-linguistic concept equivalence or synonymy. See *PLC*, M, GA, HA (especially HA4).

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A Women's Thesaurus is an indispensible contribution to the development of a feminist theory of classification. It is not only a valuable list of current language in use, but also contains a suggestive division and assortment into eleven main classes (subject groups), elegant chains, and eight excellent tables of common isolates (also called foci or delimiters). This work must form the basis for the continuing project of feminist classification in North America. I have endeavoured to show some possible directions for that project. However, before any further work is done in the thesaural domain, serious and sustained attention to classification theory should be undertaken. This will reveal that the deep systemic obstructions to emancipatory conditions of representability will require unrelenting opposition, institutional change, and (auto)critical vigilance.

Information Organisation

I will briefly mention three sweeping calls by feminist librarians for radically new forms of classification. Though these arguments have for the most part fallen on deaf ears, their authors stand among the few to recognise the depth of the problems, what is at stake, and librarians' ethico-political responsibility to remove the obstructions to feminism they (re)produce. They provide the immediate inspiration for this thesis.

Ishbel Lochhead indicted all existing forms of bibliographic organisation in the English-speaking world (Colon, PRECIS, LCSH, LCC, Sear's, Dewey, UDC), especially emphasising the pervasive problem of 'male norm'.[60] While commending Bliss's *Bibliographic Classification* for its provision of a whole main class to women, she argues that sexism is "inherent" in all classification schemes in use. Lochhead refers to two schemes developed by British feminist libraries, the Fawcett Library's adaptation of DDC 18 and the "more satisfactory" one produced by the Women's Research and Resources Centre. The latter is a faceted scheme (presumably rigidly-faceted) and uses a colon device for synthesis. Lochhead implies that a *sui generis* solution will best meet the demands of feminists.

Later in the same year, Connie Miller called for academic librarians to "peel back another of the vital layers that is keeping women's perspectives out of the academic disciplines," namely "standard forms of information organization."[61] Miller begins her compelling column by quoting nineteenth-century feminist Elizabeth Oakes Smith, who understood that feminists aimed at "nothing less than an entire subversion of the present order of society, a dissolution of the whole existing social compact." She then dismisses reformist efforts in a memorable sentence which provided the heading for this section: "simply including women's materials in a library collection is the 'add women and stir' approach to incorporating women's perspectives into the organization of information." Using Andrea Dworkin's concept of oppressive "standard forms" (which in the idiom of this thesis might be called 'canonical forms'), Miller argues that all systems of information organisation currently used by librarians--including those of machine-readable and print indexes, catalogues, and classifications--impose dominant judgemental forms upon information seekers: "large collections of materials by and about women are accessible only through perceptual screens, that is, finding tools designed to reflect male-centered values and perspectives. The availability of these collections remains at the mercy of male-defined control." Interestingly, Miller says *A Women's Thesaurus* has "begun" the process of peeling away the obstructions.

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[60] Ishbel Lochhead, "Bibliographic Control of Feminist Literature," *Catalogue & Index*, no. 76/77 (Spring/Summer 1985): 10-15.

[61] Constance Miller, "Standard Forms of Information Organization: Academic Libraries and Curriculum Integration," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 23.

Finally, in an answer to Miller's manifesto, Nancy Humphreys calls for "a woman's classification system."[62] She, too, begins her article with the unequivocal need for radical change: "Until a new classification system is developed, libraries in this country [USA] cannot serve the needs of women as well as they serve those of men" (9). In a brief but suggestive argument, Humphreys attests the need to go beyond subject heading work and presents the benefits of a classified catalogue for women's materials. Like Lochhead, then, and in contrast to Miller, she argues for a separate collection of women's information, complete with a separate classification theory and scheme. Humphreys' oppositional approach and her discussion of the bases for change make her statement the fullest of its kind, though she shares North American librarians' unfamiliarity with classification (e.g., she confuses a classified catalogue with a classification scheme) and stops short of Millers' crucial call for redesign of all forms of information organisation; Humphreys, it seems, assumes that feminisms' implications go no further than women and women's information reductively (biologically) defined. On the other hand, she concludes: "A woman's classification system . . . should not be just another band-aid solution; it should be a *challenge* to the existing systems to change for the benefit of all users" (12).[63] This pushes the task somewhat beyond the development of a "women's classification system" narrowly conceived.

Miller and Humphreys fight through the mystification of classification in North America and bring feminist oppositional consciousness to bear on the problem of bibliographic classification. Unfortunately though perhaps not surprisingly, I could find no subsequent work by feminist librarians which has addressed their concerns. I have endeavoured to do this. In the critique of *A Women's Thesaurus*, I have developed Humphreys' insistence that feminist work go beyond subject headings. Like Miller, I have assumed that feminism changes everything--and not only for women. Feminist librarians must develop comprehensive classification theory and work because they are the only ones saying why it matters, and furthermore because feminism is about history, society, knowledge, and self, not only about women narrowly defined. In the concluding chapter, I explore further where a feminist encounter with current classification theory might begin and lead.

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[62] Nancy Humphreys, "Beyond Standard Forms of Information Organization: A Woman's Classification System for Libraries," *Feminist Collections* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1987): 9-12, 13-14. Page references are in the text.

[63] Susan Searing responded directly to Humphreys in the same issue of *Feminist Collections*. She concedes the need for more helpful filiatory sequence and points out how online catalogues perpetuate the inadequacies of existing cataloguing standards. But, as noted (n. 40), Searing spoke for the 'realistic' and 'pragmatic' position against change--value, uniformity, as well as her own circumvention strategies. Susan Searing, "Response," 13.

Negotiating the Structures of Violence[64]

As practitioners of a critical-oppositional discourse, feminist librarians must talk about strategy: the use of necessary constitutive exclusions (e.g., identities, institutions, histories, solidarities, theses) to seize situationally the value-producing apparatuses which determine and overdetermine the conditions of representability. Deconstructivists like Spivak and Meese talk about negotiation: the process of producing/being produced by, executing/being executed by, and modifying/being modified by strategies and structures. "We're all sites of negotiation" (*PCC*, [147-]148). Negotiation is negative and positive; it can open up the ethical and non-ethical. Examples of the latter include: foreclosure, appropriation, misrepresentation, and totalising strategies, that is, deriving global solutions from (situational) strategies.

Negotiation's social pre-condition is the possibility of self-representation, the space from and language with which to speak.

> Unless I speak myself, language will not serve me, and only then does it throw me and the other(s) into a negotiating relationship so that we can bargain with each other and with language over our shared property, our respective investments in signification. This idea of negotiating figuration, the (re)presentation of the self, identity, and community, . . . provides the scene of

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[64] The section heading is taken from the title of a 1987 interview with Gayatri Spivak which appears as *PCC*, chap. 11.

> struggle for writers historically excluded from representation.[65]

Meese seems to be saying that the pre-condition is the *im*possibility of self-representation. But on the other hand, this itself presupposes a more profound kind of possibility. But even within this (im)possibility, the most important thing to remember is that negotiations are never taking place between equals here. Those who would be the centre, holders of the can(n)on(s), force others to the margin so that geography of power sustains that centrality. At this point, strategies are called for which are not theoretically correct, namely, placing the supposed margin at the putative centre (see *PCC*, 40-41). This is the politics (in the limited sense) of representation in library classification. "Every explanation must secure and assure a certain *kind* of being-in-the-world, which might as well be called our politics" (*IOW*, 105-106). Of course, this self-conscious move demands ever-vigilant auto-critique and is never sufficient or finished.

The current impossibility of implementing an anti-pluralist, decolonized feminist theory of IR and classification calls for a discussion of negotiations which are currently taking place. I will emphasise four approaches currently used by feminist librarians (these are my names for them): (1) circumvention; (2) technique; (3) technology; and (4) representation. Unfortunately, scarcely any of the authors of these approaches conceive them(selves) as strategies or negotiations.

Circumvention has already been mentioned in connection with the work of Susan Searing. I use the term to refer to administrative or 'public' services provided in the interest of bypassing or decreasing dependence upon current conditions and forms which deny representation and access to women and their books. Searing provides the definitive statement on circumvention in her history of the Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large at the University of Wisconsin.[66] Here she discusses separate collections, bibliographic instruction, reference services and publication programmes. The latter three were instituted and maintained by Esther Stineman, Linda Parker, and Searing, each while serving as Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large. This trio, along with Catherine Loeb, has been extraordinarily productive, assembling two now-standard bibliographies,[67] a journal (*Feminist Collections*), a union list of women's studies materials for the Wisconsin System, a continuing bibliography of feminist books and periodicals (*New Books on Women & Feminism*), and a number of bibliographic aids, including reading lists, research guides, and a current contents service. All this in addition to their visibility on the North American women's studies and library scenes, including in women's studies thesaurus and database development projects.

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[65] Meese, *(Ex)Tensions*, 130-31.

[66] Susan E. Searing, "Feminist Library Services: The Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large, University of Wisconsin System," *Special Collections* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 149-62; reprinted in *Feminist Collections: Libraries, Archives, and Consciousness*, ed. Suzanne Hildenbrand (New York: Haworth Press, 1986), 149-62; see also Searing, *Introduction to Library Research in Women's Studies*; and Loeb, Searing, and Stineman,

The problem with these "strategies" is that, though enormously helpful, they are not strategies at all; in fact, they appeal to the eventual erasure of opposition for their ultimate justification. There are two aspects to this. Almost without exception, the articles cited invoke either the hoped-for disciplinisation of Women's Studies or, conversely, "integration." In the former case (Broidy, Jesudason), the desire seems to be that current circumvention-as-research-instruction will someday become 'legitimate' disciplinary research instruction.[68] In the latter case (Searing, Huston & Yribar, Olson), the integration of women's studies into the curriculum becomes an occasion of "serendipitous consciousness-raising" as sufficient sanction/warrant for business as

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Women's Studies. On separate collections, see also Searing, "Institutions of Memory: Libraries and Women's Work(s)," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 26 (Winter 1987): 235-36; Olson, 167; Melba Jesudason, "Building a Women's Studies Reading Area Collection: University of Wisconsin-Madison, College Library Experience," *Reference Services Review* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 81-93. On library/research instruction, see also Ellen Broidy, "Bibliographic Instruction in Women's Studies: From the Grassroots to the Ivory Tower," in *Conceptual Frameworks for Bibliographic Education: Theory Into Practice*, ed. Mary Reichel and Mary Ann Ramey (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1987), 86-96; Mary M. Huston and Rita Yribar, "Women's Knowing and Knowing Women: Instructional Lessons from Collection Development," *Research Strategies* 9, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 77-86.

[67] Esther Stineman, *Women's Studies: A Recommended Core Bibliography* (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1979); and Loeb, Searing, and Stineman, op. cit.

[68] Note Miller's very different notion of integration in "Standard Forms."

usual (for feminist and non-feminist librarians and indexers).[69] In the end, these two justifications collapse into each other, as the first emphasises the institutional (the "emerging discipline") and the second the epistemic (the "new social variables" and knowledge as accumulation) dimension of the same internal, evolutionary growth pattern. Circumvention becomes the necessary travails of a new field, the products of circumvention merely the IR accoutrements of any discipline. These moves make the circumvention project of Women's Studies librarianship as currently conceived somewhat discontinuous with the purposes of critical-oppositional feminisms. The former discourages thinking critically about epistemology, the academy, strategy and new conditions of representability.

Hildenbrand suggests that women's studies research requires better technique. As she herself admits, however, the techniques she suggests for searching online indexes "are among those found in typical manuals on online searching."[70] Like the circumvention strategies discussed above, this is another way to learn to live with the un-transcendable status quo. Detlefsen, Pritchard, and Searing, on the other hand, transmute coping into official techno-utopianism, heralding the benefits for women in the coming of librarianship's version of the millennium. Pritchard and Searing especially celebrate hypertext. Searing describes it as "a glorified system of transparent cross-references, linking information among multiple conceptual avenues and allowing users to 'follow their noses' in researching a topic."[71] Pritchard says it allows "publishers and computer firms to market huge amounts of intricately linked, full-text multi-media information, . . . all stored in such a way that one can search and manipulate almost randomly depending upon the particular connections needed for the research."[72] As the illusion of Transparency nears realisation in the ultimate development of structuration, this kind of uncritical 'strategy' must be strongly and persistently opposed, even as it makes such opposition nearly impossible. Here it becomes clear that unless feminist librarians desist from such abrogation, indulgence, and premature celebration, a new informatics of domination will be allowed to extend themselves unimpeded, always structured and coded elsewhere, the coercion hidden behind pretty, manipulable interfaces. My conclusion is, then, that unless feminist librarians vigorously pursue classificatory work, IR *will* be sublimated in first-world play on the telematically managed surface of neo-colonialism. Technology can be useful for feminist librarians, especially where it makes the violence of information organisation visible.

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[69] Searing, "Feminist Library Services," 154.

[70] Hildenbrand, "Women's Studies Online," 71-72.

[71] Searing, "How Libraries Cope," 21. Searing adds: "Any information system that allows for more individual variation on the part of the user is a step toward equity." This reveals the individualism of this technology and its conception of equity.

While the negotiations above tend toward the proliferation of marginal spaces or the totalisation of the status quo and Transparency, real strategic work in feminist librarianship is being done by those self-consciously attempting to expand the possibilities of representation. I will only mention a few oppositional (as opposed to reformist) examples which I take to be particularly promising. Allow me to reiterate that this is not a theoretical programme (as outlined above) or a series of recommendations, but rather a set of provisional *strategies*.

The first is the "first principle" of the SRRT's Sexism in Subject Headings Committee. I will quote it in full:

> The authentic name of ethnic, national, religious, social, or sexual groups should be established if such a name is determinable. If a group does not have an authentic name, the name preferred by the group should be established. The determination of the authentic or preferred name should be based upon the literature of the people themselves (not upon outside sources or experts), upon organizational self-identification, and/or upon group member experts.[73]

Although, as with every other social practice, this "authentic name" principle could be exceedingly dangereous (e.g., its unreflexive, culturally-specific/determined use of the terms "literature," "organizational," and "experts"), it could be an emancipatory rallying cry. "Authentic" here is catachrestical, but its strategic exclusions could be in constant motion, an impossible, always receding, but seemingly reasonable, even commonsensical target; it could function strategically as a point of reference for broad consensus building. It points away (though not nearly all the way) from the cognitive imperialism of 'natural-language' IR systems oriented strictly toward the usage of First World academics, and ultimately aims at creating the conditions for self-representation. As I have attempted to show, this is a potentially comprehensive oppositional task. Furthermore, although on the surface it restricts itself to subject heading work, the "authentic name," along with its corollary basis in "the literature of the people themselves," could also guide work in the idea and verbal planes.

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[72] Pritchard, "Trends," 12.

[73] Marshall, *On Equal Terms*, 7.

Second, both the Committee and Olson suggest a "feminist perspective" or "feminist aspects" delimiter.[74] Classificationists, including Ranganathan and members of the Classification Research Group, have recognised the need for giving primacy to viewpoint in many subjects. Such a device could open the way toward standpoint IR systems, which would have to include such things as "masculist perspective," "capitalist perspective," and so on.

Thirdly, *A Women's Thesaurus* presents an opportunity for a direct negotiation with the North American Library System. Its descriptors could be added, with their full chains for context, extension and intention, to the note or subject fields of all MARC records, including cataloguing copy. Though this must be conceived as a strategy, it would begin to make the excessive violence of Library System practices (including commodified readings and mindless uniformity) visible in every record. It would re-inject humanising work in the idea plane into classifying activity, asserting an alternate predication of value and subverting the System's fetishism and discourse of efficiency. Of course, it would also greatly improve access for academic feminists in the short term.

Fourth and finally, I turn to my favourite: Sherre Dryden's account of her activities as women's studies librarian at the University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie.[75] Dryden's motto was 'whatever it takes':

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[74] Marshall, *On Equal Terms*, 13; Olson, "Subject Access," 166.

> There is no accomplishment in buying books, putting them on the shelves, and then just waiting around to see if they're used. We shouldn't build collections just to say we have them; we must become activists to get them into people's hands. I use a number of strategies to insure that women's studies materials get used. (12)

Dryden's strategies may appear superficially similar to circumvention, but here they function as truly oppositional negotiations with the structures of violence. Her subversive, provisional, anti-pluralistic, antagonistic, confrontational, and socio-historically situated programme included: compiling a multidisciplinary bibliography of relevant books in the Salkehatchie collection; retaining attention-grabbing dust jackets for feminist books; putting fiction by women in display racks; annotating new feminist titles for the campus newspaper; writing research aids on feminist topics identified by her; *always* using women's studies topics in bibliographic instruction ("I produce instructional materials and develop instruction sessions that highlight women's studies regardless of what the course is" (12); students "later 'select' the topics I have talked about" (13)); loading the collection with feminist sources in "target areas" of patron and teaching interest (11); and loading the catalogue with suggestive cross-references. Many of the elements of this extensive oppositional-activist programme are, as Dryden called them, rather "unlibrarianly" things to do (11). But perhaps this is precisely the point: that feminist librarians are somewhat 'improper', refusing to be cowed or named by the structures they oppose, recognising that more is at stake in social practice than maintaining the purity of their own narrowly defined 'professional responsibility' and that more is at large in the (academic) world than the good or ill will of individuals who speak the same language.

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[75] Sherre H. Dryden, "Building a Women's Studies Library with no Curriculum, Budget or Administrative Support," *Feminist Teacher* 3, no. 2 (Spring 1988): 10-13. Page references are in the text.

CHAPTER V

FEMINIST LIBRARIANSHIP AS A PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

> Thus people in their social activity must perform a double function: they must not only make social products but make the conditions of their making, that is, reproduce (or to a greater or lesser extent transform) the structures governing their substantive activities of production. Because social structures are themselves social products, they are themselves possible objects of transformation and so may be only relatively enduring.
>
> --Roy Bhaskar, "The Possibility of Social Scientific Knowledge"

Beginnings

This thesis has ranged widely over disparate, hopefully suggestive, ground. In the broadest possible sense, I have argued that the structures of violence immanent to the bibliographic apparatus are negotiating in certain ways with feminism. I have attempted to show how this overdetermined encounter is going. I have intervened in the interest of narrating its development and of exposing the contradictions, the obstructions to the emergence of emancipatory practice. I have found one of these in the conditions of representability. The representational violence of the North American Library System is irreducible and must thus be made *visible* so that its mechanism, warrant, and other ethico-political commitments become available for critique and change.

Academic librarians' alienation from books makes the ethico-political and intellectual responsibility to represent academic feminism an impossible one. This social relation is hidden in the fetishism of the library's commodified reading endowed with negative virtuality always keyed elsewhere. The transformational, fractured, and conflictual history and discourse known as feminism is dismissed and thus harmed by misrepresentation, by this refusal to read; its progressive, complex struggle is homogenised and hindered by this sanctioned ignorance.

A return to work in the idea plane, to reading, to the analysis of discourse, yields rich insights for the theory of knowledge and thence for classification work and classification theory. Here I have chosen to do this work in feminist literary studies. It has yielded six provisional principles for a decolonized feminist theory of classification (reiterated in Appendix C). But feminist literary studies is not within the Library System's current conditions of representability.

The obstructions to new conditions of representability in the bibliographic apparatus are: current economy, value, canons, and their mystifications; the social conditions/relations of knowledge production, dissemination, and retrieval; and knowledge conceived as mastery, dominion, and accumulation. These obstructive contradictions *all require sustained critical-opposition work* of feminist librarians to bring them to productive crisis. But the obstructions to new conditions of representability inhabit the current discussion of classification amongst feminist librarians. Of course, on the other hand, so do significant possibilities. These obstructions and possibilities can be revealed through persistent (auto)critique.

I believe the most important finding of this thesis is that a feminist (auto)critical research programme and feminist practice in academic librarianship are necessary and promise to be fruitful. I have shown that a tentative beginning may be detected, and I intend this thesis to be a contribution to its advancement. A proposal for a feminist research programme for librarianship has already been made by Jane Anne Hannigan and Hilary Crew.[1] In this article, they are more interested in research as such and its method. However, after a suggestive review of some work on a feminist theory of knowledge and philosophy of science, they state: "Feminist theory . . . provides a theoretical framework for a rethinking of the philosophy of librarianship" (31). They conclude: "A critical analysis of the theories from which librarians and library educators have drawn from library practice, combined with newer feminist theories, can be the basis for a research agenda that will give a different, and more powerful, face to the body of knowledge in librarianship and information science" (32). Hannigan and Crew do not acknowledge that such work is already being done. In a sense, they are correct to ignore it, for, as I have attempted to show, feminist librarians too easily assume they know what feminism 'is', what it means, and where it should be going. Hannigan and Crew do not reproduce this mistake. In fact, they show feminist librarians how to read feminist theory in terms of their own work by inserting the words "librarianship" and "librarians" into a quotation from Sandra Harding's *Whose Science*!

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[1] Jane Anne Hannigan and Hilary Crew, "A Feminist Paradigm for Library and Information Science," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, October 1993, 28-32. Page references are in the text.

On the other hand, Hannigan and Crew reveal themselves to be 'discipline'-bound when they state: "Theory and research and the library canon are perhaps the crucial place to begin a reconceptualization of what an alternative scholarship in our profession might mean" (32). This version of the theory-practice split and division of labour, so symptomatic of librarianship, fails to recognise that (1) such an alternative scholarship-on-the-ground has already been in progress for over a decade and-a-half, and thus (2) the point is not just to do better scholarship but to break down the theory that allows "theory and research" to proliferate on one side of the division of labour while ignoring the obstructions to emancipatory practice. The second, which looks for a "place to begin" in method and in building a "body of knowledge," is precisely the enabling factor for the blindnesses of practice/theory (including the feminist version).

But these questions are somewhat removed from the current point, that is, that feminist librarianship is a shared and emergent programme of research and practice. For the balance of this chapter, I will briefly introduce several critical (in every sense) directions for this programme as I understand it, which may be immediately and productively engaged but are too extensive to discuss in full here. At the same time, I hope to extend the substantive argument of the previous chapters.

Analytico-Synthetic Theory and the Conditions of Representability

Throughout the thesis, I have referred to the third edition of Ranganathan's *Prolegomena to Library Classification* and the "analytico-synthetic" (or "freely faceted") theory of classification it expounds (*PLC*, CY). The theory is in fact acknowledged as the most comprehensive theory of document classification, the book its most profound and complete explication.[2] I have used analytico-synthetic theory (AST) as a position from which to critique feminist work in classification. More importantly I have implied and here explicitly propose the (auto)critical study of the theory and how it may be useful to and impede the work of feminist librarians' projects.

However, two immediate and related problems arise when discussing AST: the vast potential, and the paucity of exempla. Colon Classification (CC), now in its seventh edition (1987), is the only incarnation of freely-faceted classification. It is constructed and revised at the Documentation Research and Training Centre in Bangalore, India. In North America, progressive classification work is confined almost entirely to Karen Markey's DDC Online project.[3] As interesting and promising as that work seems in technical terms or in principle, DDC is a hopelessly archaic information organisation (not to mention its orientation to the bottom line and enthralment to the bureaucratic imperatives of intransigent libraries). In the United Kingdom, the influential and active Classification Research Group (CRG; established 1952), though accepting and building on Ranganathan's theories, is currently committed to the rigidly-faceted BC2.[4] The Fédération Internationale d'Information et de Documentation (FID), the proprietor of UDC, is the only 'Western' organisation committed in principle to AST.[5] But its overhaul of UDC is decades from realisation.

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[2] In fact, readers outside North America will find most of chapter four's argument predictable, even routine. But within the context of North America, analytico-synthetic theory is by no means the received wisdom. On the contrary, as such work as *A Women's Thesaurus* shows, North American 'thesauri' may be constructed from nothing other than an alphabetical list of preferred natural-language terms thrown into a few haphazard classes and arrays.

[3] See Karen Markey, "Keyword Searching in an Online Catalog Enhanced with a Library Classification," in *Classification of Library Materials*, ed. Bengtson and Swan Hill, 99-125.

[4] It is interesting to note that much of the CRG's work was done before the publication of *PLC* edition 3; when it formed the freely-faceted CC4 had just appeared (also 1952). BC2 itself is an excellent classification; many classes are now available and some have already been revised. It should definitely be considered a model (though not a paragon) for feminist classificationists. A discussion of some of its strengths and weaknesses will be implicit in much that I say here. Jack Mills and Vanda Broughton, *Bliss Bibliographic Classification*, 2d ed. (London: Butterworths, 1977-). BC2 and its revisions are now published by Bowker-Saur.

This world situation shows that the field is wide open for feminist classificationists. While it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel, it is quite necessary to not confuse the strengths and weaknesses of CC with the potential of AST. On the other hand, the seeming strangeness of Colon and the almost fearful reaction to it in North America must not be taken as the final word on it. Often this reaction has something like a relationship to the de-intellectualisation of classification work under current library mechanisation in North America and elsewhere, not to mention North American's cultural assumption of supremacy and insistence on the centrality of the familiar. But ultimately, I believe feminists must be vigilant and assume that decolonizing feminism changes everything. So I propose starting at the beginning.

Theoretical Pillars of AST

For the AST currently rests on four theoretical pillars which are far from beyond question and not without intellectual and ethico-political interest: (1) like any classification theory, at the core is a theory of knowledge, expounded in Part X of the *Prolegomena*; (2) a theory of the "structure and development of the universe of subjects," discussed in Part P of the *Prolegomena*; (3) a semantic theory (theory of fundamental categories) and a syntactical theory (theory of facet structure), both in Part R, the climax of the *Prolegomena*; and (4) a theory of subject definition and filiatory sequence.

Ranganathan's theory of knowledge was positivism, which he was never seriously disposed to question (*PLC*, XC-XD). Positivism is consequential for Ranganathan and for AST generally in a number of ways, including his use of science as the 'model' of all knowledge (with his main interest, mathematics, as the primary tool of knowledge) and his diagnosis of the problem for current theory as the classification of compound "micro subjects" (*PLC*, XG14), which gives rise to "documentation" and "depth classification." Ranganathan's version of the history of science is also a product of his positivism. It is in fact monistic, piecemeal, and internal and thus cannot sustain an account of knowledge as a social product or, hence, knowledge production as labour. For example, in XF4, Ranganathan implies the relationship between Newtonian and Einsteinian science is one of "different grades of depth."

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[5] See Eugeniusz Scibor and Ina S. Shcherbina-Samojlova, "A Strategic Approach to Revising the Universal Decimal Classification," in ***Information, Knowledge, Evolution***, ed. Koskiala and Launo, 148.

So Ranganathan's version of the sociology of knowledge was confined to "certainty of social use" (*PLC*, XG23). In general, however, he saw this as a purely instrumental use by government, industry, and education (see *PLC*, AC, DB6, PM, XA2, XE5, XG14), and he did not theorise any effect upon his work by these relations of knowledge production and use beyond the emphasis on documentation. Thus, he could talk about the "postulational method" as one "not bound by any preconceived metaphysical or other ideas and not even by factual experiences" (*PLC*, XF5) and of the "purification" of logic, language, and observation (*PLC*, XD5). Here we have positivism's human being as passive sensor of de-historicised 'facts', deriver of deductive hypotheses, and bloodless confirmer of law-like regularities in an uninterrupted march to correspondence. The conception ignores completely positivism's ideological moment when it organises human being, society (including documents), and nature according to the conditions and categories which make them possible objects of such knowledge. Therefore, far from being critical of the emergent social conditions of knowledge production, Ranganathan spoke vaguely of the inexorability of the "intensification of research" and the "re-orientation" of education (*PLC*, XA2).

Yet "the fundamental assumptions of the positivist world view, that science is *monistic* in its development and *deductive* in its structure, lie shattered."[6] Feminist theorists along with most philosophers of science have long since abandoned positivism as indefensible and now explore the possibilities of feminist epistemologies such as standpoint theory and a feminist sociology of knowledge. "The work of feminist, postcolonial, and postmodern theorists has shattered the chimera of unity."[7] As I have begun to show in this thesis, these arguments are consequential for classification theory. The CRG has recognised this and has proposed alternatives to Ranganathan's positivism, including General Systems Theory and a theory of integrative levels. Prominent CRG member Derek Langridge has said that Ranganathan's narrow focus on category-concept specification and synthesis allowed him to ignore the philosophical problems in his work, where science was taken as the 'model' for all knowledge "treated as a homogeneous whole."[8] Langridge himself promotes the idea of "fundamental disciplines" or "forms of knowledge," which he defines as "different modes of apprehending the world *for* knowledge [which] produce distinct domains in the world of knowledge."[9] These efforts attempt to avoid, in the interest of 'relatively permanent' schemes, dialectical theories of knowledge which stress the relativity and sociality of knowledge production, legitimation, and use. The question should be: how can AST respond to this critique?

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[6] Bhaskar, *Reclaiming Reality*, 11; see also chap. 4, "Philosophies as Ideologies of Science: A Contribution to the Critique of Positivism."

Ranganathan's deductive-nomological orientation led him to lavish much greater attention on an empirical, descriptive, and analytical account of the development of the universe of subjects and isolate ideas.[10] According to him, new subjects come into existence through the conjunction of two or more existing subjects or isolate ideas. Thus, Ranganathan used two symptomatic metaphors for growth in the universe of subjects: the growing organism (which is in fact the fifth Law of Library Science; *PLC*, DB5) and the old banyan tree ("grafting"; *PLC*, PL). Once again, the piecemeal, unitary, and internal conception of knowledge prevails as the 'model' to the detriment of external, radical, and disjunctive factors in history and society. Throughout this thesis, I have tried to open up this inadequacy from a certain feminist perspective. So on the one hand, then, AST remains the only theory based upon an explicit description and typology of the genesis of new subjects. It is an attempt at a completely "dynamic theory" of classification, the first of its kind.[11] On the other hand, without explicit dialectical attention to historicism and the sociality of knowledge to match *and account for* its own attention to the intension of research specialisations, this characterisation will remain incomplete. It will continue to block the possibility of use for difference and epistemic transformation. So there is a great need for ongoing work in this area.

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[7] This from Helen E. Longino's recent review essay, "Feminist Standpoint Theory and the Problems of Knowledge," *Signs: Journal of Women In Culture and Society* 19 (Autumn 1993): 212. Dorothy E. Smith, *The Conceptual Practices of Power*, especially chap. 3 ("The Social Organization of Textual Reality"). I think Smith's work can be fruitful for librarianship when read as a theory of the ways in which canonical concept-category relations (constitutive of certified knowledge) exercise power in their ideological moment by organising the world and 'subject' as possible objects of knowledge; they thus marginalise or occlude disjunctive point of view, make invisible the real relations of power ("ruling"), and render change nearly impossible. See also Linda J. Nicholson, ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 1990), part I ("Feminism As Against Epistemology?"; includes papers by Nancy Fraser and Linda J. Nicholson, Jane Flax, Christine Di Stefano, Sandra Harding, and Seyla Benhabib); Marsha P. Hanen, "Feminism, Objectivity, and Legal Truth," in *Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Code, Mullett, and Overall, 29-45.

[8] Derek W. Langridge, "Disciplines, Forms and Phenomena," in *Ranganathan's Philosophy: Assessment, Impact, Relevance*, ed. T. S. Rajagopalan (New Dehli: Vikas, 1986), 223.

[9] Langridge, "Disciplines," 223; see also Langridge, *Classification*, 21, 32. To be fair, Langridge has proposed that in fact "viewpoint" is one of the most fundamental characteristics for division; see "Disciplines," 225; *Classification*, 32.

Ranganathan is perhaps best known for the third theoretical advance: bringing the systematic study of semantic and syntactic relationships into library classification.

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[10] As noted, *PLC*, part P, is the *locus classicus*. The development may also be seen in: A. Neelameghan, *Classificationist and the Study of the Structure and Development of the Universe of Subjects*; S. R. Ranganathan, *Impact of Growth in the Universe of Subjects on Classification*, FID/CR Report, no. 12 (Copenhagen: Danish Centre for Documentation, 1972); Shabahat Husain, "A Theoretical Basis for the Accomodation of New Subjects in Colon Classification Edition 7," *International Classification* 16, no. 2 (1989): 82-88. For another positivistic view of the unitary growth of knowledge, see the Popperian inductive-falsificationism of Don Swanson, "Libraries and the Growth of Knowledge," *Library Quarterly* 49 (January 1979): 3-25; reprinted in *The Role of Libraries in the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Don R. Swanson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 112-34.

[11] Prithvi N. Kaula, "Rethinking on the Concepts in the Study of Classification," *Herald of Library Science* 23, no. 1/2 (January/April 1984): 30-44. Hillel Weiss offers a slightly different, perhaps promising, definition of 'dynamic': "the possibility to change data bases, and improve them while reading." The other two conditions upon which Weiss's dynamic indexing system is based are "rapid access" ("by multi-referencing channels to a specific point which is actually analyzed") and "maneuverability" ("of information into deductive and inductive channels: meaning navigation from text outside to reference or from reference to text." Hillel Weiss, "Dynamic Indexing for the Analysis of Literary Text," *International Classification* 18, no. 4 (1991): 200.

Ranganathan's postulate of the "five fundamental categories" may be the most criticised and admired aspect of his work (*PLC*, RB). It is also probably the most misunderstood in that AST is often thought to predetermine which facets, facet sequence, and numbers of rounds and levels are appropriate to each subject. This is, in fact, not the case; AST provides no prescriptive formulae for the representation of subjects. However, Bernd Frohmann and the CRG have shown that Ranganathan's idea of abstract classification "moulds" (*PLC*, XG) and the fundamental categories are open to objections of semantic *apriorism*.[12] Ranganathan's search for "ultimate generic ideas" which "manifest" themselves throughout the universe of subjects is, in fact, an attempt to postulate an *a priori* method of containing (escaping, as he calls it) the phenomenalism demanded by positivism. Frohmann and some members of CRG insist that the semantic basis must be established *a posteriori* for each subject based on the analysis of the category-concept relations in its literature. It is here that the CRG parted ways with Ranganathan and AST strictly defined to dedicate itself to rigidly-faceted special schemes, especially those of BC2. This is not to say that they have rejected fundamental categories as such. On the contrary, they are essential for the consistent division and assortment of any universe. However, they are now necessarily conceived as domain-specific, that is, characteristics or categories immanent to that domain. Of course, this comes at a heavy price, namely at the expense of extensive schedules of common isolates and an expressive general notation which can sustain uniqueness of class number. These are significant concessions in terms of computerised retrieval. Here is a crucial aspect of AST that requires more work and is ripe for feminist critical contribution.[13]

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[12] See Frohmann, "An Investigation"; see also D. J. Foskett, "The 'Personality' of the Personality Facet," in *Ranganathan's Philosophy*, ed. Rajagopalan, 144-45.

[13] Colon Classification also relies on "Traditional Main Subjects"--the traditional academic disciplines--for its first order array. This aspect of its semantic validity is not essential to AST. However, its absence from the theory, as noted above, comprises an important theoretical desideratum for AST. At first glance, the semantic warrant for Ranganathan's fundamental categories and the facet concept itself (idea as atomised fact) appears to be a positivist theory of knowledge. This is mitigated somewhat by the syntactical aspect in that "facet" is itself a relational term. What this may mean for AST is yet to be investigated. For a discussion of semantic warrant, see Beghtol, "Semantic Validity." For a recent discussion and proposal for a "integrative"

Ranganthan's introduction of systematic syntactical relations into library classification is not controversial and is indeed the greatest product of his genius. This is where the notion of "facet" comes into play. The idea that subjects are constituted by conceptual/ideational components (facets) arranged in syntactical relation to one another is now the guiding principle of most tenable subject analysis. AST now also provides for a plethora of non-hierarchical relationships.[14] As discussed in chapter 4, feminist work in classification/indexing has already shown that this aspect of AST could be a vital element of a research programme in feminist librarianship and the expansion of representability.

AST and IR

I have already noted some emancipatory changes in the conditions of representability that might be forthcoming from the use of AST in IR; for example, the systematic distinction and relation between subject heading/thesaural work and work in the verbal plane. But there are equally important ones at which I have only hinted, and they all arise from the potential of systematic syntax for computerised IR. The eminent British classificationist E. J. Coates has already written an excellent article on this topic. He emphasises AST's systematic representation of syntactical relationships and states: "Labelled facets are fully amenable to data processing techniques."[15] The CRG's Derek Langridge also recognises that "for computers, it is not the length or complexity of the symbols that count, but the way in which it is used. The [analytico-

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general classification (that is, integrated domain-specific schemes) by a member of CRG, see Douglas J. Foskett, "Concerning General and Special Classifications," *International Classification* 18, no. 2 (1991): 87-91.

[14] See Neelameghan and Maitra, *Non-Hierarchical Associative Relationships Among Concepts*. Specifically, the authors argue that all of the relations in their typology of thirty-nine can be represented in the four relations provided by AST (i.e., facet, speciator, phase, and co-ordinate).

[15] E. J. Coates, "Ranganathan's Thought and Its Significance for the Mechanisation of Information Storage and Retrieval," *Herald of Library Science* 27, no. 1-2 (January-April 1988): 12. Testing has been done in various quarters; in Canada, for example, by Michael A. Shepherd and C. R. Watters, "Implementation of Facet-Based Retrieval Using a Relational Database Management System," in *Ranganathan's Philosophy*, ed. Rajagopalan, 649-58.

synthetic] notation of Colon Classification has been criticized for its complexity, but its systematic nature makes it ideal for computers."[16] A fully faceted thesaurus with systematic *a posteriori* syntactical relations is amenable to similar, though not the same, use. From the perspective of feminist librarians' criticisms of existing IR systems, systematic representation of syntactical category-concept relations, both hierarchical and non-hierarchical, would be a great innovation.

But there is more potential here than meets the eye. It lies in the area of general versus special classification, a perennial problem for librarianship and one already briefly discussed in connection with separate women's collections.[17] To present this argument, I must back up and finally give an account of Ranganathan's theory of subject definition and mapping (filiatory sequence). For Ranganathan and for the other modern classificationists, library classification has been a problem of "mapping": the arrangement of a multi-dimensional universe of compound subjects along a line in a helpful and filiatory sequence. The arrangement had to be one-dimensional because of the physical limitation of the codex. Now Ranganathan used the metaphor of a sunspot to represent the nature of a subject. That is, from the perspective of any individual reader, the focal point of interest was the "umbral region," the subjects of "immediate-neighbourhood-relation" within the "penumbral regions," and the peripherally related subjects within the "alien regions." This multi-dimensional image of a subject can be mapped onto a line by taking a one-dimensional cross-section. Thus, as a reader moves along the resulting line, she or he will travel through alien region (a) to penumbra (a) to umbra to penumbra (b) to alien region (b) for each successive subject. This is what Ranganathan calls "Apupa Arrangement" (*PLC*, QB). The ideal facet sequence is the one which results in "Everywhere-Apupa-Arrangement," that is, apupa arrangement for every reader. Obviously, this is not possible. So a compromise must be found which is "of the greatest help to the greatest number of people on the greatest number of occasions" (*PLC*, QB72). Hence arises the ethico-political problem of general classification: this compromise always serves the hegemonic and the canonical.

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[16] Langridge, *Classification*, 56.

[17] See Searing, "Feminist Library Services," 151-55; Searing, "Institutions of Memory," 235-36; Olson, "Subject Access," 167.

However, Ranganathan insists--and this cannot be emphasised too strongly--that "the democracy of the Five Laws of Library Science is of a severe kind. A specialist reader . . . should be served as efficiently as the majority" (*PLC*, WB2). So he proposes three ways for AST to sustain this radical democracy and provide apupa arrangement for minority readers and interests. The first is the de facto aid of his theory of subject definition: "An organised or systematised body of ideas, whose extension and intension are likely to fall coherently within the field of interest and comfortably within the intellectual competence and the field of inevitable specialisation of a normal person" (*PLC*, CR3). Although there is much to criticise in this definition, it is oriented toward intellectual practice and requires full systematic attention to any and all subjects which are contemporaneously being pursued. Within CC7, this means that 779 *basic* subjects are enumerated. The second technique is the familiar separate or reading area collection, which Ranganathan called "favoured collection" (*PLC*, WB6).

The third and most complex is the theory of bond strength. If a reader has an interest which is not regarded as a basic subject or is in fact a basic subject but also a facet, isolate, or relative concept of other basic or compound subjects, this reader is said to have interests which cluster at weaker regions on the chain than the basic facet end. Bond strength has a verbal and a notational variant for minority interests but both involve the help of the catalogue. The verbal variant is what has become known as chain indexing, where the chain is 'spun out' at its weaker bond points and the names of all the facets, isolates, and associatively-related terms are placed in an alphabetical class index (*PLC*, WB5). The notational variant is considerably more powerful. Ranganathan called it "classified pocket" (*PLC*, WC). Here class numbers are broken down by any divisions or relations that are needed, including *within* facets, and the names of more specific terms are entered in the alphabetical index in classified order under each of the more general terms, even where they do not carry the same verbal sign. That is, while the interests of readers and canons of classification require that documents be classified as specifically as possible, the notational variant of the theory of bond strength allows them to be retrieved at *any* level in chain or by *any* relation. The "classified pocket" provides apupa arrangement for readers with that minority interest.

Now in the paper environment, providing more than ten or twenty classified pockets for an academic library would be impossible. But in the computerised catalogue it is conceivable with the notational variant of the theory of bond strength to provide *multi-dimensional* everywhere-apupa-arrangement, that is, of course, depending on the power and consistency of the classification scheme. (This is a linking problem for faceted thesauri in a computerised catalogue, though perhaps not an insurmountable one.) Ranganathan himself, not a man given to idle utopian speculation, foresaw this potential in his chapter "Computer and Classification":

> Perhaps, the computer is being fast sophisticated sufficiently to enable it to *type out such a spectrum of classified entries in the Apupa pattern specific to the reader at the moment*. But to do this, the memory of the computer should be stored with minutely classified main entries of all the books and other documents. This again makes the old dead books also point to the same conclusion as the current live books do. The library profession cannot throw away the responsibility to learn the discipline of classification and to keep it continuously cultivated. To get the best result from the computer, classification may need enrichment of a new kind, which calls for special research. (XA63; my emphasis)

This vision is theoretically possible with current technology and current AST. In the idiom of this thesis, it makes possible the reversal of the negativity of the virtual body in its current manifestion through the restoration of its 'use-value'; it presents the prospect of the material realisation of the virtual body.

The obstacles to enabling this kind of representability and retrieval--or perhaps to state it better, the obstacles which enable its exclusion--are considerable. Some of these are problems immanent to library classification narrowly defined, such as the specification of all ideas related or marginal to a given basic or compound subject (working with enough characteristics for division). There is also the associated problem (already mentioned) of the need for domain-specific, including culture-specific, classification schemes (over positivism's unity of knowledge claim), but which threatens the integrity and expressiveness of class number. Finally, I have been sketching the more momentous obstructions throughout this thesis, so here I simply quote a rather sarcastic passage from Coates's article:

> The ideal goal of the mechanising interests is an information retrieval system which needs no auxiliary lexical tools, no intellectual contribution to indexing, and no intellectual effort by the user. . . . In the meantime it is something of a consolation prize if the mechanising interests can bring influence to bear to cause a reduction in the human intellectual effort applied to subject indication. It is very evident that they do not wish to encourage greater intellectual sophistication in this area, even when, as in the case of *facet analysis* and the syntactic dimension, the additional sophistication is of a kind which lends itself to computer processing. . . . To the extent that this posture of non-recognition of a vital factor in concept analysis is accepted by the library and information professions, there is bound to be a falling-off in standards of indexing performance, and of necessary rigour in the construction and maintenance of information languages, due to consequential slipping from the idea plane to the verbal plane. There are occasional [signs] that some data base producers are aware of deficiencies in *indexing quality*. Ultimately such deficiencies arise from the post-coordinate mode itself.[18]

As I have been at pains to show, this analysis accords with the work of feminist librarians and the conclusions of this thesis. I have argued the need for a theory such as AST at this moment in history, whether it be AST or some other theory dialectically constructed from its achievements. But if not this, then at least my discussion of IR establishes *the consequentiality of what is denied*, including not only emancipatory practice (AST or otherwise) but also history, sociality, and ethico-political responsibility, *and of the acts which deny* them, including the acts of those who continue daily to reproduce the status quo, uncritically providing strength to its inexorability in their clamour for 'efficiency' and in their denial of momentousness. I hope feminist librarians will take up the challenge.

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[18] Coates, "Ranganathan's Thought," 13. Sheila Intner argues: "If [index] publishers are governed by profits and markets, what forces govern professional indexers? Hopefully, one of those forces is responsibility--to users of [indexes] along with publishers, and fellow indexers. . . . High quality indexes have the least censorship potential." Sheila S. Intner, "Censorship in Indexing," *The Indexer* 14 (October 1984): 107.

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A discussion of AST does not, of course, exhaust the possibilities for a feminist research programme in classification theory. Much broader questions which are directly relevant are being discussed in various literatures, for example in Foucault's analysis of knowledge/power and the formidable literature it has generated, in the continuing investigation of the imperial and neo-colonial organisation of knowledge, and in the quickly growing reflexive, critical, and historical literature on the academy and the disciplines. Emancipatory practice in librarianship must become intimately acquainted and involved with these issues, as suggested by Vincent Mosco (albeit rather weakly).[19] They are the heart of comparative, critical, historical, and developmental classification theory.

Collecting as Critique

From standard manuals on book selection and collection development to the famous Asheim essays on selection, to studies of and pronouncements on censorship, most (not all) librarians have assumed the irrevocability and indeed the fundamental adequacy of what I call the menu approach to collecting.[20] This approach has two steps: finding and buying, or to put it in library jargon, identification or bibliography and selection. The more subtle practitioners of this approach recognise that the first step may require some effort on the part of the conscientious librarian, and that the second step is a decision process, so they make the seemingly obvious move of breaking it down into two possibilities: yes/accept or no/reject. The former is good, the latter is unfortunate but necessary, which leads to a discussion of criteria for acceptance as expressed in collection development policies. When the 'no' is practised altogether too vigorously or post facto, it is called 'censorship'. The *standard* and *presupposition* is always the menu, the blandishments of the so-called *marketplace*, that is, 'what exists' (*das Bestehenden*). The situation recalls Adorno's characterisation of cultural critics as

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[19] Vincent Mosco, "Dinosaurs Alive: Toward a Political Economy of Information," *Canadian Journal of Information Science* 17, no. 1 (April 1992): 41-51. Other citations highly relevant here include: Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* [*Mots et les choses* (1966)] (New York: Pantheon, 1970); Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993); and Ellen Messer-Davidow, David R. Shumway, and David J. Sylvan, ed., *Knowledges: Historical and Critical Studies in Disciplinarity* (London: University of Virginia Press, 1993).

[20] Standard North American manuals include: Arthur Curley and Dorothy Broderick, *Building Library Collections*, 6th ed. (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1985); William A. Wortman, *Collection Management: Background and Principles* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1989). The Asheim essays: Lester Asheim, "Not Censorship But Selection," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, September 1953, 63-67; Lester Asheim, "Selection and Censorship: A Reappraisal," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, November 1983, 180-84. Interestingly enough, both of these essays were written under pressure from ascendent rightism in the US. North American librarianship's major statement on censorship is: *Intellectual Freedom Manual*, 4th ed., comp. Office of Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association (Chicago: American Library Association, 1992). Hereafter cited in the text as *IFM*. This document in fact provides considerable resources for going well beyond the liberal interpretations it customarily receives. Recent theoretical writings that have diverse

> traffic agents, in agreement with the sphere as such if not with its individual products. . . . When the critics in their playground--art--no longer understand what they judge and enthusiastically permit themselves to be degraded to propagandists or censors, it is the old dishonesty of trade fulfilling itself in their fate. The prerogatives of information and position permit them to express their opinion as if it were objectivity. But it is solely the objectivity of the ruling mind. They help to weave the veil.[21]

This sums up my reading of the theoretical framework for librarianship's discussion of collecting.

Feminist librarianship, it seems to me, must insist on several objections to this approach, objections which arise from the observation that the strategic exclusions of the menu approach are, like those in current classification theory, drawn somewhat more narrowly than is ethically and politically justifiable. Another group of objections arise from the observation that acceptance and rejection are two sides of the same coin; that is, not only in the zero-sum game that collecting has become but rather in the

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merits but share the menu approach include: Jan Dee Fujimoto, "Representing a Document's Viewpoint in Library Collections: A Theme of Obligation and Resistance," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 34 (January 1990): 12-23; Charles A. Schwartz, "Book Selection, Collection Development, and Bounded Rationality," *College & Research Libraries* 50 (May 1989): 328-43; Bill Katz, "Class and Selection," *Collection Building* 7, no. 3 (1986): 34-36.

[21] Adorno, *Prisms*, 20.

attempt to develop a *coherent* collection, a decision to include is at the same time a decision to exclude and vice versa. The first group of objections points out that the narrow limits of librarianship's current collecting discussion veil the fact that censorship and its effects (including reproduction of an unjust status quo) are immanent to the bibliographic apparatus, while the second group leads us to a corollary of the first for librarianship, namely that censorship and its effects are immanent to the collecting process. This opens up the irreducible ethico-political commitments of collecting materials for libraries.[22]

Ultimately, the feminist objection comes to this: any theory or policy of collection development is incomplete insofar as it assumes that the twin freedoms of speech and press prevail for everyone in North American society. The narrowly empirical, liberal, and libertarian conceptions of the freedom/censorship dichotomy which dominate the ideology of librarianship are all committed in practice to affirming the existence, or at least the possibility, of a 'free' press under advanced capitalism and patriarchy.[23] A feminist research programme in collection development will abandon narrow attention to sound selection among, and acquisition of, already existent things as a lonely and institutionally significant decision process. It will draw back to look dialectically at the production of recorded knowledge and at systemic or structural censorship as it is brought to bear upon and by individuals in North American social conditions and history, as well as what compels and sanctions it. That is, it will dialectically and critically analyze the *bibliographic apparatus*, its production, reproduction and legitimation, relations, exclusions, and effects. This is the momentous, concrete, and dynamic social and historical whole within which all collection development occurs. The corollary programme for institutionalised librarianship narrowly conceived becomes: dialectically and critically analysing the *collectability* of 'books', potential 'books', or classes of 'books' under specific social and historical conditions, including what determines and sanctions it. The whole process is perhaps best named critical collecting, or collecting as critique.

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[22] Some may object that I use the word 'censorship' too broadly, preferring to reserve it for an intentional suppressive action by individuals or groups. But I do not believe the distinction or the assumptions upon which it is based can be sustained. By the same token, it hides its own roots, while its ideological effects are momentous. Thus, it should be at least strategically abandoned. Some support for this move may be found in the professional literature in the widely acknowledged link between classification/indexing work and accessibility. See, for example, Sheila Intner's indicatively titled article, "Censorship in Indexing." Further support may be found in the "Freedom to Read" declaration of ALA and the Association of American Publishers. In the preamble to the declaration's seven propositions, a distinction is made between "conformity" and "suppression" while both are included in the "larger curtailment of expression." For unstated reasons, however, "conformity" is excluded from the definition of "actual censorship." *IFM*, 107-108.

[23] For an uncharacteristically spirited, albeit rather narrow, debate on "intellectual freedom" between a libertarian librarian and somewhat eclectic liberal one, see John Swan and Noel Peattie, *Freedom to Lie: A Debate About Democracy* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1989).

These formulations are much in need of refinement, and I want them to be only suggestive beginnings. But what is needed here and now is an abbreviated marshalling of the evidence from my survey of academic feminisms and feminist literary studies, from the writings of feminist bibliographers and elsewhere, for the mechanisms of this determination of and sanction for the continuum of collectability. The continuum encompasses a range: from uncollectible for materials nonexistent, inconceivable, unrecorded, trashed, or otherwise lost; to those which are remote or *unheimlich*; to those with canonical aura; and finally to materials bolded, highlighted, flashing and presented in living colour on a multinational publisher's or jobber's menu. Of course, it also includes, among other things, the level of oppositional or other consciousness present or exercised by or through the individual academic library bibliographer, whose acts are effects and productive of the nexus and totality of determinants in the construction of decisions and their defence.

Women's Studies Collecting

Women's Studies academic librarians have been extremely active over the past two decades attempting to put in place the standard bibliographic tools for their emergent 'discipline'. Considerable scope for study and critique already exists in their numerous bibliographies, bibliographic essays, and published collection development policies.[24] Some of this work recognises the need for broad international collecting and collecting in a number of traditionally ignored or difficult subjects such as lesbianism and women's movements. But for the most part, it evinces an unaltered view of the bibliographic apparatus. Women's Studies collection development is conceived as profoundly and tryingly multi-disciplinary (usually in terms of LCC-based subjects and allocation formulae); of recent interest; justified in terms of institutional/programmatic "support" and "growing importance"; and slightly shifted toward the small press side of the perennial collecting conundrum 'mainstream' versus 'alternative'.

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[24] A sampling of the relevant work: Stineman, *Women's Studies: A Recommended Core Bibliography*;

A surprising exception is Searing's and Ariel's argument in their selection essay "Women's Studies." On its first page, the authors state: "feminist knowledge will never be fully codified within existing academic and publishing institutions" (250). They go on to discuss four obstacles to the expression and distribution of academic feminism: (1) existing academic arrangements, including the entrenched status of the disciplines, the division of selection labour and money in the academic library, and feminism's overt ethico-political commitments and difference from itself (251-52); (2) existing publishing arrangements, including "a world where a white male elite, by and large, still controls the creation, dissemination, use, and cost of information" and many women must struggle to be heard, where "the power of the press ultimately belongs only to those who own one" (253); (3) "budgets far too small to match the rapid growth and diversity of feminist publishing" (253); and (4) traditional library selecting practices and standards, including acquisition policies, standard review media, and periodical indexing availability (255, 261). Searing and Ariel conclude:

> As women's studies gains academic recognition and legitimation, and thus

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Loeb, Searing, and Stineman, *Women's Studies*; Joan Ariel, ed. *Building Women's Studies Collections: A Resource Guide*, Choice Bibliographic Essay Series, no. 8 (Middletown, CT: Choice, 1987); Charlotta Hensley, "'Sinister Wisdom' and Other Issues of Lesbian Imagination," *Serials Review* 9, no. 3 (Fall 1983): 7-19; Susan Searing and Joan Ariel, "Women's Studies," in *Selection of Library Materials in Applied and Interdisciplinary Fields*, ed. Beth J. Shapiro and John Whaley (Chicago: American Library Association, 1987), 250-69; *Women's Studies Collection Development Policies* (Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 1992); Sarah M. Pritchard, *RLG Conspectus: Women's Studies* (Mountain View, CA: Research Libraries Group, 1990); reprinted in *Women's Studies Collection Development Policies*, Appendix C.

> increased publication through mainstream channels, libraries are, almost automatically, integrating this material into our collections. Yet a great many works crucial to the study of women's lives, and to the development of feminist theory, scholarship, and action are not caught by the conventional nets of acquisitions and bibliographic control. Selectors in women's studies cannot rely upon (and should, in fact, seriously question) the inherently biased standards of "the academic gatekeepers," those people in the academic and mainstream publishing communities, still predominantly male or male-identified, who set the criteria for scholarly excellence, define knowledge, and administer its distribution, including its distribution to libraries. (266)

This is a rather sweeping indictment of an academic librarianship which takes the current bibliographic apparatus for granted, and which must, of course, be included among those academic gate-keepers and must be held responsible for their reactive collecting and reliance upon mainstream distribution channels. But Searing and Ariel avoid openly criticising librarianship in general and their feminist colleagues in particular, though I think the implication is clearly present. There is much else to object to in their essay, including the authors' own apparently uninterrogated faith in the legitimation of Women's Studies through continued disciplinisation. Nevertheless, as I have attempted to show, a certain reading allows a powerful statement of the curtailment of women's expression to emerge, based on the extensive experience of these two veteran feminist librarians.

A smaller, overlapping body of literature has been produced by Women's Studies academic librarians on general collection development issues and related topics, such as academic publishing (for introductory documentation, see Appendix B). For example, Mark Emery has provided a perceptive and politically astute account of the revolutionary potential of academic feminism and the difficult position of women's studies collecting in the academy.[25] There is little to argue with in the substantive, library-oriented aspects of Emery's characterisation. It deals in standard fashion with Women's Studies as a complicated interdisciplinary field in need of separate attention and funding (for political influence). Difficulties arise, Emery says, from its lack of clear definition, the non-traditional and archival nature of the range of needed materials, and the inadequacy of finding tools, including periodical indexes and LCC/LCSH.

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[25] Mark W. Emery, "Considerations Regarding Women's Studies Collection Development in Academic Libraries," *Collection Management* 10, no. 1/2 (1988): 85-94.

But Emery clearly does not go deep enough. Others have done so, although selectively. I will attempt to suggest how the analysis has been and may be deepened. I laid some of the necessary groundwork for a feminist critique of collection development in chapter three's "Narration 4," where I discussed the literary canon and pluralism at some length. In what follows I will revisit some of those themes and put them briefly in a more explicit library context.

Bibliographic Archaeology

My discussion of gynocriticism and other projects of bibliographic archaeology presents direct challenges to librarians, both public and academic. Most writers on women's studies collection development acknowledge the need for retrospective collecting of archival materials and reprints. But few of these feminist librarians discuss the scope and implications of this work. On one level, *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English* lists over 2700 women writers in English alone, many of whom are relatively unknown, lightly discussed, outside anyone's canon, and who remain uncollected or, more to the point, *uncollectable* by librarians. Justice alone demands of librarians a staggeringly large project of perpetual archaeology, first in the form of collecting, but also in the work of digging, then encouraging and even undertaking reprints. Furthermore, anti-canonical works such as the *Feminist Companion* widen the field of possibility, and thus they bring to crisis the exclusivity of selection while at the same time enabling a discussion of that irreducible exclusivity. Second, librarians must then address what these books mean for the existing collections. In what ways do they change conceptual relationships, the facet structure of subjects, access languages, histories, budgeting formulae, and so on? Third, librarians must address the ethico-political status of their own commitment to slavishly reproducing the canonical histories and selections as defined by the patriarchal critical/disciplinary establishment. In other words, why is this massive archaeological effort suddenly necessary, and how are librarians, in their continuing commitments to what is 'major' and 'of interest', complicit in this injustice? Finally and perhaps most importantly, what are the implications for the bibliographic apparatus that the expression of women was curtailed and that librarians concurred in that curtailment? Surely the kind of historical-critical work called for here will lead to significant changes in librarians' current approaches to building collections under advanced capitalism, neo-colonialism, and patriarchy.[26]

Multi-cultural Collecting

Recent cries for multi-cultural collecting, whether in the form of the emergent crisis of ethnic enclaves under hegemonic pluralism,[27] feminist internationalism,[28] or 'multicultural librarianship',[29] require the greatest vigilance. This is, in part, the argument of my "Narration 5." An understanding of neo-colonialism (internal and external) and its effects in the production of knowledge is a precondition for responsible work in this area. An easy multi-culturalism, in collecting as in classification, will merely enable and reproduce a "new orientalism." "The price of success must not compromise the enterprise irreparably" (PV, 222).

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[26] For other suggestions concerning how this kind of historical-critical archaeological and pedagogical project might proceed, see chap. 3, "Narration 4," and especially Lauter, "The Two Criticisms" and the other essays in *Canons and Contexts*.

[27] For example, see the argument of Rhonda Rios Kravitz, Adelia Lines, and Vivian Sykes, "Serving the Emerging Majority: Documenting Their Voices," *Library Administration & Management* 5 (Fall 1991): 184-88.

[28] Searing and Ariel note the requirement that "selectors must recognize that feminism and its expression in academia are global movements and require collections international in scope even where . . . non-English-language acquisitions may be limited" (251). Pritchard's "RLG Conspectus" (in *Women's Studies Collection Development Policies*) requires "broad foreign language holdings, imprints from all major world regions" for collection Level 4 (Research) (13). At Level 3 (Instructional Support), however, Pritchard only requires "works in major European languages" and she omits the "small press" requirement altogether. Incidently, "underground and radical press" are omitted from Level 4.

[29] See Zielinska, ed., *Multicultural Librarianship*.

Value

Value, whether in the form of 'scholarly', 'literary', 'intellectual', 'use', or 'intrinsic', continues to be an important category in collection development.[30] Yet librarians are strangely naïve about it. In fact, values enable and sanction the fundamental social relations and as such are immanent to the bibliographic apparatus and to the collecting process. In their exchange form, they make possible sociality itself. They underwrite and naturalise/mystify all canons and authority, reproducing themselves by regulating access to the activities and institutions productive of them, including the bibliographic apparatus. Collecting is one of those activities, and the library is one of those institutions. This articulation makes available another of librarianship's unavoidable ethico-political commitments and effects.

The most important thing about values is that they are not properties of things but socially and historically *contingent*, as argued by Kolodny (*DTM*, 108) and most influentially by Barbara Herrnstein Smith. Herrnstein Smith argues that all value, including scholarly, is "the product of the dynamics of a system, specifically an *economic* system" where express preferences, evaluations, selections, and endurance are value-(re)producing acts and processes contingent upon psychophysiology, personal and community identity and history, and other "social, cultural, institutional, and contextual variables."[31] Unfortunately, Herrnstein Smith not only fails to consider the contingency of her own theory but also hierarchical access to the value-(re)producing apparatuses. An appreciation for the radical contingency of value in open systems should not hide or veil the domination of narratives of value in the society (e.g., those which enable capitalism, patriarchy), which transcend the cumulation of personal preferences (which are to that degree themselves overdetermined), which are dialectically determined and mystified through history and dominant communities *with* access, and which *depend* upon the impairment of the capacity of others to produce *for themselves* the social differential in question.[32]

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[30] These terms continue to appear in essays, books, and policies on the subject, usually as "standards of quality," "intellectual quality," or "scholarly value." For example, Curley and Broderick, *Building Library Collections*, 39-41, 51; "Collection Development Policy of the University of Alberta Libraries," 10 April 1987, Edmonton, 3.

[31] B. Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value*, 30, 38.

Herrnstein Smith ultimately falls back upon a species of utilitarianism to provide the fundamental narrative of value, the value of the object corresponding to its performance of a "desired/able function."[33] Academic librarians also often depend upon this appeal to usefulness to defend the valuableness of a selected text: usefulness to scholars, usefulness to instructional programmes, usefulness for their reputation and influence, and so on. Such defenses of use-value are far from unproblematic, although they are the most difficult to recognise and critique as they rely upon their supposed 'naturalness'. But first, they ignore the currently dominant narrative of value in the society, namely surplus value, which introduces commodification as the basic process of valuation. As Katie King and Herrnstein Smith herself have argued, texts--academic, literary, historical, feminist, and other forms--are well and deeply inserted into the circuit of commodity production--with momentous consequences.[34] Second, 'function' and 'use' are themselves not properties of objects, but rather of socio-economic systems and relations. Under capital logic, they--along with the identities, histories, and culture itself--tend to be consumed by exchange and surplus value, becoming, as Elizabeth Meese has pointed out, one of their basic products and effects. The analysis also applies to those 'needs' and 'interests' which call use-value into being. This raises the question of the contingent use of use.[35]

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[32] This is part of what Spivak calls the "price-in-exploitation" (*IOW*, 167). Adorno throws light on this process and the will to forget history: "Dynamic force is merely one aspect of dialectic: that one which the belief in the practical spirit, the commanding act, the indefatigable ability to produce prefers to render prominent, because perpetual renewal best conceals the old untruth. The other, unpopular aspect of the dialectic is the static. The self-movement of the idea, the conception of history as syllogism, as Hegel's philosophy has it, is no theory of evolution. That has simply made for the human science's agreeable misunderstanding. The constraint under which it grasps the restlessly destructive unfolding of the incessantly new consists in every moment the incessantly new being at the same time the old at close range. The new does not append itself to the old but remains the problem [*Not*] of the old, its destitution, as it becomes acute as an immanent contradiction by means of rational determination, its unalterable confrontation with the universal in the old itself." Theodor W. Adorno, "Reflexionen zur Klassentheorie," chap. in *Gesellschaftstheorie und Kulturkritik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975), 8-9 (my translation).

[33] B. Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value*, 47.

[34] King, "Producing Sex, Theory, and Culture"; see chap. 2, "Narration 2" above.

In a richly suggestive passage already quoted in chapter 3, the deconstructivist feminist critic Meese attempts to suggest how a non-oppressive use of use may be conceived in a new selection process, "a process of selection which speaks of relationships between texts and readers that are never finished, that cannot serve as the foundation for a new literary history (except perhaps in the form of how, why, and by whom choices are made)" (31).

> We could foreground in disagreements of this kind [over value, selection, judgement] what we variously, individually and collectively, expect a text to do for us, under what conditions, and who "we" are (or think "we" are) in order to judge it useful--a position in which we attempt to speak our own needs and desires as readers, and to articulate or at least to expose our subject positions, rather than to make "truth claims" concerning the undying, universal, and intrinsic value of a given text. (34)

Here we can begin to grasp how use-value under current conditions is an enabling effect and how we may begin to de-mystify and discuss it.

Of course, thinking about exchange narrowly does not exhaust the topic of value. While surplus value may be the dominant form and commodification the salient critical/analytic category, the content of books and their evaluations embody related narratives of value. Other literary and scholarly values have been shown to be oppressive, often specifically gender-oppressive, where they certify exclusive canons, instrumental rationality, objectivist epistemology, accumulative and appropriative knowledge production, or phallocentric cultural authority. Undialectical formalism is probably the most prominent example of a dominant critical/intellectual and aesthetic theory which feminists and others have undertaken to critique, including its narrow socio-economic origins, its maintenance of that privilege (it is not of course innocent of surplus value extraction), and its canonical exclusions--what it can not allow to be said under the sign of value.[36]

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[35] Meese, *(Ex)Tensions*, 35-36. Subsequent page references are in the text.

[36] See M. Eagleton, *Feminist Literary Theory*, chap. 3 ("Gender and Genre"); Lauter, *Canons and*

Before leaving this topic, I will quote two articles by feminist librarians who are explicit about the significance of their alternative narratives of value. In their 1982 article "Women's Issues: The Library Response," Neel Parikh and Ellen Broidy challenge academic librarians to stop "hiding": "If we allow our acquisition of materials that are important to women to be dictated by a parochial 'in support of the academic programs' attitude, we risk denying both campus and community women access to their history and their culture."[37] Sherre Dryden sums up this part of my discussion nicely with a comment that initiates the process outlined by Meese:

> My philosophy of education is that we have a responsibility to expose students to alternative points of view, particularly those that are radical or unpopular. Educators must challenge students, require them to question traditional values and judgments. Libraries should assist this process by giving teachers and students easy access to resources that question and challenge.[38]

The founding condition is a reduction in time and money spent on the traditional canon.

Relations of Academic Knowledge Production

Exchange value is at work in the academy's corner of the bibliographic apparatus. It enables, sanctions, and depends for its maximisation upon, among other things: stardom (big names, hot topics); success (of explanations, conquest of the object[39], accumulation and maintenance of privilege and influence, words in print,

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Contexts, part I; T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, Introduction and chap. 1. As Lillian Robinson pointed out in the late 1970s (and which remains true for librarianship in the 1990s): "Criticism has progressed so far into formalism that we have forgotten not so much that art has content but that *content* has content." Robinson, *Sex, Class, and Culture*, 17.

[37] Neel Parikh and Ellen Broidy, "Women's Issues: The Library Response," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, December 1982, 299.

[38] Dryden, "Building a Women's Studies Library, 10.

[39] On this point, see D. Smith, *The Conceptual Practices of Power*, especially chaps. 3 and 4. Smith argues that objectified forms of knowledge and the 'facts' and social relations they pretend to represent act as gate-keepers not only in the public dissemination of alternative accounts, but at the very moment of perception itself. Much of the work of the Frankfurt School in the theory of knowledge and philosophy of

grants, other types of competition, accumulation, etc.); and career (connections, protocols, endowed chairs/universities, jetting to conferences, etc.). Exchanges on this market are in the service of the (re)production of scholarly canons, the academic division of labour, and the ruling mind. This related narrative of value deserves its own critical analysis, especially in relation to its impact upon the curtailment/enablement of the production and distribution of knowledge.

The major sociological work of Coser, Kadushin, and Powell entitled *Books* has opened this up, though I suspect it is known to any experienced scholar.[40] They make three points crucial to understanding publishing as it relates to critical collecting. First, "scientific and scholarly circles define for editors what is new, good, and important" (87); or put another way, "in scholarly publishing, the academic system of 'invisible colleges' plays a crucial gatekeeping role" (367). According to this study, editors attempt to identify the "leading figures" of a particular circle, and these leaders become "academic middlemen," that is, personally chosen readers and advisors for editors, and patrons for potential authors. It is perhaps in the latter aspect that the system can best be seen in its insidiousness. Unsolicited manuscripts, which arrive at publishing houses by the hundreds or even thousands, have nary a chance of being published. Busy and powerful editors rely upon various screening devices to guide their selection process. In academic publishing, "nothing concentrates an editor's attention like a strong supportive letter from a major scholar whom the editor respects" (306). In the fact, Coser, Kadushin, and Powell estimate that such a connection raises the chances of publication for a first-time author's manuscript from one in a thousand to one in ten (133).

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science also discussed the subject-object relation in terms of conquest, domination, and superiority. Recent revelations (1994) concerning breast cancer research give new meaning to knowledge production and conquest.

[40] Lewis A. Coser, Charles Kadushin, and Walter W. Powell, *Books: The Culture and Commerce of Publishing* (New York: Basic Books, 1982). Page references are in the text. Though this book is widely known amongst academic bibliographers such as Wortman, it rarely receives a reading that foregrounds the elements which might mobilise a critical assessment of the bibliographic apparatus. I try to initiate an alternative reading from a certain feminist perspective.

The invisible college system is self-reproducing and an integral part of academic life. The authors of *Books* argue that it depends upon and reproduces feudal relationships (305-306) and academic stardom, constant splitting/narrowing of the academic division of labour, coercive publishing standards for academics, and the hierarchy of institutional academic status.[41] Supposed centrality is rewarded with power and influence over the public expression of thought in a domain of the academy.[42] "Here, as in many aspects of social life, the weaker one's own resources, the more one needs to appeal to people with stronger resources if one's voice is to be heard in the land" (307). Ultimately, academic publishers rely on and reproduce this system for securing new manuscripts, markets, and profitability.[43] Whatever the social relations of knowledge production in North American society, they are not 'free', and it seems that where they are defended as such, feminists are called to lift the veil on this ideology.

The second aspect of *Books* important for collecting as critique is the authors' observations on the centralisation of publishing. They found considerable evidence for the existence of a "dual market" in books, complete with a core-periphery relationship between large and small firms (see pp. 41-50, 364-65). Apologists for the patriarchal

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[41] For the latter, the authors prefer an indirect relationship between academic status and publishing: "status remains influential because graduates and occupants of positions in high-quality [?] school have a much greater access to effective socialization: that is, they are more confident, they will probably write better letters of introduction, they have better contacts--all because they have learned the ropes from people who already know 'what matters'" (236). This indirect relationship notwithstanding, they state: "sponsorship is crucial for an author who teaches in a less well known university" (306).

[42] Furthermore, most advisory and series editors "use their positions to defend the 'ideal interests' of the particular 'invisible college' to which they belong" (305).

[43] Dale Spender's article "The Gatekeepers: A Feminist Critique of Academic Publishing," in *Doing Feminist Research*, ed. Helen Roberts (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), accords with many aspects of this analysis and extends it to academic journals, including feminist ones. First, she observes that "gatekeepers are in a position to perpetuate their own schemata by exercising sponsorship and patronage towards those who classify the world in ways similar to their own" (191). Second, Spender point out that not only is "the [selection] process . . . weighted in favour of rejection," but "the appointment of reviewers is not open or advertised but usually associated with 'contacts' and 'friends'. . . . There are few departures from the pattern of rejecting material which is not consistent with one's own viewpoint" (194-95). In addition, the definition of book publishers and journals as mainstream or marginal determines the level of attention their material will receive and its imputed quality. The distinctions too often correspond to 'masculist' or 'feminist' (197-98).

capitalist bibliographic apparatus such as the American Association of Publishers (AAP) are fond of pointing to the recent proliferation of small presses as evidence of the openness of the publishing field, even as the pace of capital concentration increases. But this argument ignores both the strategies that small houses are forced to adopt in order to survive as well as the considerable liabilities and disadvantages under which they labour. For example, small houses face financing disadvantages, because they lack the capital to take the steps necessary to increasing the circulation speed of their returns on investment. Small houses must also pursue strategies of "market segmentation" in order to survive; that is, they must find "specialized niches." This, in turn, magnifies their already disadvantageous position in the distribution apparatus. Libraries and bookstores must work much harder to scan the multitudes of small presses for a few potential specialised purchases, while for the publishers themselves, "problems of distribution to libraries and bookstores on a national basis become paramount" (48). And, of course, to survive, these houses must also make money. Coser, Kadushin, and Powell, who, I might add, are far from radical sociologists, conclude:

> Most of these new houses have a marginal existence and can never hope to make it into the Big Leagues. Some of these small houses are flourishing within the cracks and fissures left unutilized by the major houses. However, as with most small businesses, their financial condition will be precarious, and there will be as many deaths as births among them. *The [AAP's] view that the industry is open is disingenuous*, because the rise of small houses does not offset the increased rate of concentration among large, vertically integrated publishing conglomerates. (364-65; my emphasis)

Of course, most feminist librarians know that many feminist and socialist publishers are among these small houses left with the dregs. To treat this irreducible aspect of patriarchal capitalist publishing as if inconsequential for the freedom of expression, as if unexpressive of oppressive social relations consequential for the (re)production and distribution of knowledge--that is, to treat it as an irrevocable element of what exists, as most librarians do--ignores a pressing aspect of the feminist project.

Finally, the authors of *Books* briefly discuss the role of academic libraries.

First, they point out that though librarians "swear by" pre-publication reviews, only roughly fifteen percent of all new books are reviewed anywhere (308, 315-17).[44] Second, they found that library sales are crucial, especially for small houses and scholarly publishers: "Whatever the means, library sales for serious scholarly books provide a floor on which a second level of sales through bookstores or direct mailings may be safely built" (343). This second level is one reason why scholarly books often promise the highest ratio of profit of any publishing investment. Finally, the authors extrapolate from this the implications of declining library budgets: "libraries must become more selective and will rely on publishers with a reputation for, and a tradition of, publishing good scholarship" (343); "new knowledge will be disseminated less widely and less rapidly" (368). In the absence of collecting as critique, this means, if I may draw these findings together, further reliance upon the gendered invisible college system and further centralisation in the bibliographic apparatus.

Much more must be said about gate-keeping, but I will leave it to be explored further by other feminist librarians. But now that I have indicated the socio-economic and cultural significance of librarians in their collecting activities--as subjects in the narrative of value (re)production and as social agents in the social relations of knowledge (re)production--I want to look a little more closely at the academy, the immediate social relations of legitimated knowledge production and of collecting.

In the battle for the money which keeps the academy going, the basic constituent is the discipline-based academic unit/department.[45] This compels academic feminists to pursue legitimating institutionalisation projects of persuasion. The foundation of Women's Studies or gender studies programmes and departments endows these interests with 'valid' claims upon the attention of decision makers and upon the allocation of campus funds. The conservative influence of this socio-economic method upon the production of knowledge is far-reaching. Unfortunately, while librarians are not explicitly committed to the reproduction of either the academic division of labour or the disciplines, their canons, histories, or knowledges, are supposedly critically aware of the socio-economic relations and ethico-political commitments of the bibliographic apparatus, and are explicitly committed to intellectual freedom, they acquiesce in the gesture of convenience. The 'needs' and 'interests' of the parochial but powerful majority of 'users' are rewarded with preferential treatment, with further implications for the production of knowledge. Here gate-keeping and paying tribute to the status quo are elevated to the level of 'democratic' duty, while in fact repression is merely extended, mystified, and reinforced.

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[44] Yet a major manual like Curley and Broderick can say, "[There] are real limitations upon the usefulness of the non-library based reviewing media, and yet the system appears to work reasonably well. It seems safe to say that the really significant titles of any given year receive full attention, and that the library will not be seriously misled by the reviews, in spite of the limitations" (*Building Library Collections*, 86-87). Safe, indeed!

[45] Allen B. Veaner, *Academic Librarianship in a Transformational Age: Program, Politics, and Personnel* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1990), 195-211.

Such an analysis opens up a number of avenues of argument and investigation. The histories of women's studies collection development policies in US universities indicates that these policies and the budgets upon which they are based were established in *reaction* to the institutionalisation of academic feminism.[46] Also: Searing's report of a 1983 study at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater indicates that all discipline-based selectors combined purchased less than twenty-five percent of women's studies materials. Heavy investments had to be made from women's studies budgets for materials directly relevant to literary studies and other disciplines. Searing can only conclude by citing the minimally-acceptable standard: "the maintenance of a serviceable and balanced collection requires input [money] from many departments."[47] This kind of study needs to be perpetually redone, but it clearly demonstrates the priority of discipline-maintenance 'needs' and disciplinary 'users'. Finally, the basic allocation unit in academic libraries is usually subject, which means academic department or LCC class.[48] In either case, the effects are the same: "Library budgets are frequently allocated by academic department. This widespread practice recognizes the formal power bases on campus but creates serious challenges for programs in Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies, Environmental Studies" and so on.[49] The literature of women's studies collection development resounds with the cries of inadequate amounts of money. This political and socio-economic 'strategy' is not only epistemically and institutionally conservative and appropriative but actively repressive with consequences in the academy, throughout the bibliographic apparatus (for mainstream publishers: focus; for marginal publishers: extinction; etc.), and ultimately for the just treatment of women's expressions.[50] As collecting budgets continue to shrink, all these effects will be exacerbated, as academic librarians increasingly rely on jobbers and their approval plans (i.e., abrogation of responsibility) and on the mainstream press and traditional disciplines with their narrow, appropriative, and increasingly commodified versions of knowledge and academic feminism. All of this is, of course, merely one aspect of the dispersed and pervasive mode of social production which pre-determines the menu, structures the choices, and totalises itself with brutal, theoretically-correct efficiency.

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[46] See *Women's Studies Collection Development Policies*. Much more study of this is necessary before any definitive conclusions can be drawn.

[47] Susan E. Searing, "Report on a Study of Women's Studies Acquisitions at University of Whitewater," *Feminist Collections* 4, no. 3 (Spring 1983); reprinted in *Alternative Library Literature, 1982/1983: A Biennial Anthology*, ed. Sanford Berman and James P. Danky (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1984), 58.

Censorship

ALA's *Intellectual Freedom Manual* (4th ed., 1992) contains scores of platitudinous appeals to democracy, freedom, and justice, with unequivocal expressions of hostility to suppression of expression in *any* form. Beyond the bland and uncontroversial generalities of the "Library Bill of Rights" (*IFM*, 3), whose spirit is ignored in favour of its letter under the status quo, the ideals receive ultimate expression in "The Universal Right to Free Expression" (*IFM*, 92-94) and "The Freedom to Read" (*IFM*, 109-111). The latter, a joint statement by the ALA and the AAP, commits librarians and publishers alike to cultural responsibility in the form of "not only the absence of restraint, but the *positive provision* of opportunity for people to read" ("Freedom to Read," proposition 7, *IFM*, 110; my emphasis). However this positive provision might be defined, it cannot be fulfilled under a capitalist order which commits enterprises to the maximisation of surplus value and circulation and which relies upon patriarchal cultural authority and the canonical economy to that end. As Coser, Kadushin, and Powell point out in *Books*, the AAP's version of open communication systems amounts to nothing other than dissimulation.

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[48] See Wortman, *Collection Management*, 132-33. His second, third, and fourth categories for allocation formulae--users, formats, and uses--also depend upon and reproduce the status quo in the academy and the bibliographic apparatus. These kinds of overdetermined decisions are too easily accepted in academic librarianship. Here once again, critique and vigilance must be the order of the day for feminist librarians.

[49] Searing, "How Libraries Cope," 16; see also Emery, "Considerations," 90-91.

[50] I must note that this includes the conservative 'multiple copies' policies and practices, under which only single copies of high-demand feminist materials can be bought. See, for example, "Collection Development Policy of the University of Alberta Libraries," 3, where mutliple copies are effectively limited to undergraduate reserve materials.

In the "Universal Right," the ALA endorses Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the preamble, the ALA states:

> The American Library Association is unswerving in its commitment to human rights and intellectual freedom. Freedom of opinion and expression is not derived from or dependent on any form of government or political power. This right is inherent in every individual. It cannot be surrendered nor can it be denied. True justice comes from the exercise of this right. (*IFM*, 93)

The third principle endorsed in the statement reiterates:

> The American Library Association rejects censorship in any form. Any action which denies the inalienable human rights of individuals only damages the will to resist oppression, strengthens the hand of the oppressor, and undermines the cause of justice. (*IFM*, 94)

Yet librarians' practice not only accepts the limits of expression immanent to the bibliographic apparatus and the social relations of knowledge production in their current forms, but actively perpetuates them by excluding from the perview of that practice the sources of those limitations in the society as a whole. In its *refusal to oppose* patriarchy and capitalism as incompatible with the emancipation of expression, the ALA keeps its conscience clean by defining 'objectivity' and 'balance' as harmony with the status quo, 'cultural memory' as the memory of the dominant, while pleading ignorance of the ethico-political commitments and effects of that order and its preservation. This includes the ALA's insistence upon the salience of the free exchange between equivalents in the competitive "marketplace of ideas."[51] Insofar as librarians' practices accord with this sanctioned ignorance, they fall under the critique of pluralism and repressive tolerance.

As noted near the end of "Narration 4," hegemonic pluralism attempts to exclude the recognition of otherness, discontinuity, and exclusion itself.[52] Pluralism in liberal democracy is the normative doctrine of the polity as the free competition between equal interest groups with legitimate claims on the distribution of goods. Pluralism celebrates the competition among equals where some are clearly more equal than others. Thus, systemic inequality is denied, while opposition is neutralised by seeming acceptance and the invocation of 'diversity' from the position of official, legitimated power. Meanwhile, the substantive claims of the marginal, the excluded, and the oppositional (those who refuse to celebrate their marginality and powerlessness) are dismissed as inconsequential, illegitimate, or amenable to 'dialogue', while dominant groups maintain their centrality and make no plans to cede any power or goods.

Under this regime, hegemonic "tolerance is turned from an active into a passive state, from practice to non-practice: laissez-faire the constituted authorities."[53] This is what Marcuse has called "repressive tolerance," a mode of managing dissent through appropriatively tolerating it under the totalisation of the status quo, thereby excluding the alternative from the effective possibility of articulation, not to mention fair consideration, much less realisation. In the following quotes, Marcuse outlines its workings in advanced capitalist societies:

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[51] See *IFM*, 25, 107, and *passim*. For another comment on the damage done to librarianship by this concept, see MacCann, Introduction to *Social Responsibilites in Librarianship*, 5-6.

[52] See, again, "An Interchange on Feminist Criticism"; Marcus, "Storming the Toolshed"; Rooney, *Seductive Reasoning*.

[53] Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965), 82. Page references are in the text. This well-known book contains Robert Paul Woolf's fine critique of pluralism "Beyond Tolerance." For a fuller critique of Dahlian pluralism and traditional empirical theories of power in political science, see Jeffrey C. Isaacs, *Power and Marxist Theory: A Realist View* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

> In the contemporary period, the democratic argument for abstract tolerance tends to be invalidated by the invalidation of the democratic process itself. The liberating force of democracy was the chance it gave to effective dissent, on the individual as well as social scale, its openness to qualitatively different forms of government, of culture, education, work--of human existence in general. The toleration of free discussion and the equal right of opposites was to define the clarify the different forms of dissent: their direction, content, prospect. But with the concentration of economic and political power and the integration of opposites in a society which uses technology as an instrument of domination, effective dissent is blocked where it could freely emerge: in the formation of opinion, in information and communication, in speech and assembly. Under the rule of monopolistic media--themselves the mere instruments of economic and political power--a mentality is created for which right and wrong, true and false are predefined wherever they affect the vital interests of the society. This is, prior to all expression and communication, a matter of semantics: the blocking of effective dissent, of the recognition of that which is not of the Establishment which begins in the language that is publicized and administered. (95-96)

> [The tendency of the representatives of the administered majority to execute their private interests and the will of the vested interests which create the majority] goes hand in hand with the monopolistic or oligopolistic concentration of capital in the formation of public opinion, i.e., of the majority. The chance of the influencing, in any effective way, this majority is at a price, in dollars, totally out of reach of the radical opposition. Here too, free competition and exchange of ideas have become a farce. The Left has no equal voice, no equal access to the mass media and their public facilities--not because a conspiracy excludes it, but because, in good old capitalist fashion, it does not have the required purchasing power. And the Left does not have the purchasing power because it is the Left. These conditions impose upon the radical minorities a strategy which is in essence a refusal to allow the continuous functioning of allegedly indiscriminate but in fact discriminate tolerance. (118-19)

These critiques are especially helpful to feminist librarianship as it begins to develop a critical view of the bibliographic apparatus and the collecting process. Librarians seem aware that all is not right in the bibliographic apparatus (as the comments of Searing and Ariel quoted above indicate), although they seldom articulate precisely what is amiss. The commitment to pluralism in librarianship means, among other things: (1) viewing the academy or the community of users as made up of interest groups competing on a more-or-less equal footing for the attention of library bibliographers; (2) refusing to talk about what is excluded from the menu, that is, what cannot be collected under the current order and why, acting as though everything is equally collectable, as though some views are not more prominent, hegemonic, and canonical than others; (3) refusing to recognise structural inequalities between knowledge-producing groups as the basis for curtailment of expression; (4) giving priority to central, dominant groups of users with power, while celebrating 'diversity' but giving it perfunctory, token attention. The commitment to repressive tolerance in librarianship means: (1) passively feeding upon the bibliographic apparatus within its mystification of the 'marketplace' and the status quo; (2) refusing to acknowledge who owns and runs the 'marketplace' and for whom, who has the money to be heard (is being heard) and who does not (is not being heard), and refusing to acknowledge suppression of expression here; and (3) refusing to acknowledge how librarians' and readers' subjectivity, desire, consciousness, and values are constructed and overdetermined within hegemonic culture and society.

In her important lecture "The Secret Garden of Censorship," Celeste West begins to analyse how these mechanisms work through librarians.[54] West discusses five kinds of censorship which do not answer to the intentional action definition assumed in the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*: (1) economic censorship, under which some things are defined as "worth" buying and others are not and lack of funds becomes "a cop-out for exclusion" (1651); (2) demand censorship, where no demand among users is used as a justification for exclusion without asking why there is no demand or the ways in which demand is created by collecting (1651-52); (3) "censorship-by-format"; (4) reliance upon the corporate media to define the content of 'balance', which I am calling the menu approach to collecting (1652); and (5) censorship by misrepresentation/mis-classification (1652-53). West spends most of her time on (4), the corporate media. Among her memorable comments are the following:

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[54] Celeste West, "The Secret Garden of Censorship: Ourselves," *Library Journal*, 1 September 1983, 1651-53. Page references are in the text.

> Out of laziness, fear and/or dogmatism, most librarians simply do not try to even approach collecting a spectrum of political, philosophical, and life-style material. You buy largely what the corporate media crank out. . . .
>
> Let's face it, for most of you, the 95 percent, a media controlled by rich, white men mirrors their image and their worldview. It conditions our experience and channels our response. These media do not consider themselves a public utility. (1652)

West's argument that librarians by and large do not actively collect alternative material is supported by recent historical work on the travails of those labouring with libraries on behalf of the alternative press.[55] In fact, this reveals librarianship's acquiesence in its place in the ideological apparatus; that is, librarians are doing the ideological work of racism, neo-colonial capitalism and patriarchy. West suggests that libraries begin to collect ten percent "alternative, change material." Far from parity, yet even this would be a hardship for most (1652).

Hence, what is called for in the fight against censorship is not merely 'preparing for the censor to come' (*IFM*, part 5), but rather a critical programme of feminist *anti-pluralism* and *active tolerance*. Anti-pluralism entails undermining the centrality of hegemonic masculist expression (and "hegemonic feminism") and its ideological guise of pluralism. It requires discussing who and what is not collected or collectable under current values and social relations and why (after all, much more is excluded than collected, much of it '*a priori*'), and where the power resides in those relations. It means throwing out the facile notion of 'balance' and the appropriative, bankrupt one of 'objectivity' in favour of a more objective approach. Active tolerance demands seeking out, encouraging, including and emphasising the radically oppositional, the critical, the subversive, the progressive and the emancipatory, no matter what the cost in time and money. It demands thereby undermining the attempts by the status quo to totalise itself through the mystification of the 'marketplace', a long-dead institution now a nostalgic obliviousness to the domination of monopoly. On the one hand, conservative, canonical, phallocentric, and heavily capitalised material can be found everywhere and in every library; on the other hand, tolerance, as the ALA is fond of saying, is an end in itself.

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[55] Antonia Samek, "Barnacles and Watchdogs," Paper presented at the School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 29 November 1993. Samek discusses the history of the *Alternative Press Index* within a theoretical framework similar to that of this thesis. As Betty-Carol Sellen replied to David Berninghausen: "It is the traditional library establishment which has succumbed to the censors without a whimper, who collect only the most obvious and acceptable, who cater to the haves, and ignore the have nots." "Social Responsibility and the Library Bill of Rights: The Berninghausen Debate," *Library Journal*, 1 January 1973, 28.

Ultimately, one realises that the "Library Bill of Rights" commits librarians to "presenting all points of view" (policy 2), not primarily those which are conveniently or efficiently collectable. It commits librarians to cooperating "with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access" (policy 4), not with capitalists pursuing surplus value in the name of selflessness, whose conceptions of 'free' expression and 'free' access are revealed for what they are under the light of socialist feminist collecting as critique.[56] The concept of censorship and

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[56] See "Social Responsibility and the Library Bill of Rights: The Berninghausen Debate," 25-41, especially the contributions by Betty-Carol Sellen and E. J. Josey; see also MacCann, ed., *Social Responsibility in Librarianship*.

Perhaps the most sustained attention to these issues--that is, the relation of social and political theory and practice to librarianship--is taking place in the current rethinking of *partiinost* (party-mindedness, one of Lenin's neologisms, dating from 1894) by Russian librarians. The *locus classicus* for the debate is Lenin's 1905 polemic, "Party Organisation and Party Literature," which can be found in *Lenin, Krupskaia, and Libraries*, ed. S. Simsova, trans. G. Peacock and Lucy Prescott (Hamden, CT: Archon Books & Clive Bingley, 1968), 10-15. A discussion of this essay, with its invitation to "a free press, free not only from police interference, but also free from capital, free from careerism--and more: free from bourgeois-anarchist individualism" (13), is needed in North American librarianship. It must, of course, be read in historical context, where "party" does not refer to a ruling Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

For Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaia's contribution to the development of *partiinost* in library work, see Boris Raymond, *Krupskaia and Soviet Russian Librarianship, 1917-1939* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979), especially chaps. 3, 4, and 8. For the 1919 clash between the 'objectivists' and Krupskaia and the Bolsheviks, see pp. 63-64. Raymond memorably quotes Krupskaia from a 1918 article: "To the extent that book selection is entrusted to the librarians, this requirement [of objectivity] is unfulfillable. Being human, a librarian will be tendentious" (94).

For the current debate in Russia, see Dennis Kimmage, ed. *Russian Libraries in Transition: An Anthology of Glasnost Literature* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1992), especially the brilliant essays by the great professor of library science at the St Petersburg Institute for Culture, Arkadii Sokolov, including "The Double-Edged Principle of Partiinost," pp. 75-876. Sokolov convincingly argues that "by calling writers to take part in a 'literature that is openly aligned with the proletariat', Lenin was trying to attract them not with profits or career success, but with a promise of genuine creative freedom. He convincingly exposed the hypocrisy behind the myth that absolute freedom for a creative individual was possible in a society based on the power of money. According to Lenin, it was precisely proletarian partiinost, despite its disciplinary constraints, that offered the path to spiritual freedom. Since it is impossible to live in a society and be independent of it, true freedom is attained by the person who consciously and unselfishly subordinates himself its opposite, 'freedom', is seriously under-theorised if the practice of feminist librarianship as envisioned here cannot be enlisted on the side of freedom while at the same time bringing to serious crisis the received notion of censorship.

Activism

Feminist social and political activism may well provide a model for a feminist library practice adequate to the challenges of collecting as critique. Sarah Pritchard's "Linking Research, Policy, and Activism: Library Services in Women's Studies" adumbrates such a view.[57] Based on her practice as Reference Specialist in Women's Studies at the Library of Congress, Pritchard concluded that:

> The librarian must not only expand the types of sources available, but broaden the settings in which services are provided, becoming a professional link among users and producers (the two not always distinguishable) of information.
>
> The librarian needs to reach out to various user groups and become a knowledgeable synthesizer within the subject field. This leads to a proactive approach which combines subject specialization with general reference. . . . The primary concern is with information delivery, wherever it is found and to whoever needs it. (92)

Pritchard herself acted as such a "link" between groups of feminist activists, lobbyists,

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[*sic*] to party discipline, and not by the nonparty individualist whose talent is for sale" (79).

The enduring value of the principle of *partiinost* is a social and political *consciousness* of the constraints of freedom in a patriarchal, capitalist, and racist society, and tireless work in the cause of human emancipation. Official communist *partiinost* raised class interests above all others in social practice. Certainly the world is more complex than that. Nevertheless, in social practice, the realities of these dominations and oppressions, the violence they perpetrate, the limitations they impose, and the responsibilities they entail are all irreducible.

As valuable as the Raymond book and the Kimmage collection might be, one must be wary of North Americans treading on Russian ground. If this warning applies to materials written during the height of the Cold War, it now demands careful attention to an even greater extent. Both books are marred by two nearly fatal flaws which are, alas, symptomatic of these times: (1) ignorance of their subject, especially of the consequential writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin and of the history of socialist theory and practice; and (2) Western capitalist triumphalism in its most patronising and solicitous mode. The hand of this pernicious ideology guides Raymond's historical inquiry and Kimmage's selection. Kimmage's book takes another strike for its omission of the 1989 essay by Iu. A. Shreider, "Deklaratsiia Prav Chinovnikov," which the other essays on *partiinost* take as a point of departure.

[57] Sarah M. Pritchard, "Linking Research, Policy, and Activism: Library Services in Women's Studies," *The Reference Librarian* 20 (1987): 89-103. Page references are in the text.

and researchers in Washington, DC. Her work actively supported and fostered feminist practice. She points out that a national capital may involve greater opportunities and responsibilities, but "what is important is the attitude that the librarian must get out and be in touch with all the relevant groups" (95). Though Pritchard was somewhat troubled about the relationship between her "objectivity" and her commitment to feminism, she believed that "'social change information advocacy' is consonant with the dynamics of professionalism" (100).

The examples of Pritchard and Sherre Dryden (whose article has already been discussed) show why feminists are well placed to take the lead in librarianship. Combining (auto)critical theoretical analysis of society, history, and subjectivity, a commitment to radically emancipatory practice, and oppositional consciousness, they can actively bring people together, and people together with information, in service of social change and human emancipation. Feminists can cut through the ideological and socio-economic totalisation of the bibliographic apparatus, its narrative of value, and its immanent contradictions, bringing it to crisis through the promotion of a *radical democracy of expression*. Feminist librarians can give the oppressed access to an important part of "the apparatus of value-coding" and thus to "the social capacity to produce a *differential*" (PV, 222). Feminists are not satisfied with the surface phenomena presented to them for their intellectual consumption; they, instead, tirelessly listen under the frenzied din of the reproduction of global capitalism and patriarchy for the tenuous whisper of a parched human throat. These are the painful, thankless, and persistent tasks of feminist librarianship.

EPILOGUE

FEMINIST LIBRARIANSHIP AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

If it is not clear already, I believe librarianship is confronted with a non-choice between its current capitulation (librarians as apparatchiks) and the oppositional social responsibilities of a feminist librarianship (librarians as critical theorists and social practitioners). As stated at the outset, a critique such as this one finds its conclusion in that tortured topic, the "philosophy" or, better, the theory of librarianship.[1]

"Social responsibility" is the name by which the relationship of society and librarianship has come to be known. Social responsibility in librarianship denotes not merely a recognition that libraries are social institutions or that librarians need to study libraries in their social context. The two most crucial aspects of social responsibility theory are: an ethico-political commitment to *radical democracy*, and a recognition that librarians are *cultural workers*, perhaps intellectuals in the Gramscian sense. The theory reveals the analytical centrality of the social totality within which the library is but one institutional framework for cultural work, and thus uncovers the fundamental importance to librarianship of social theory, cultural criticism, and history. Librarians negotiate with the historical moment in which they live, its socio-economic formation

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[1] This particular aspect of feminist librarianship's leadership in the profession might fill an urgent deed, as implicitly expressed by the recent establishment of the Strategic Visions Steering Committee (funded by the Council on Library Resources). Not surprisingly, the results so far have been dismal, judging by the intellectual poverty of the Committee's discussion documents. See Don Bousseau and Susan Martin, "Visions: Taking Control of Our Destiny," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 18 (September 1992): 231; Strategic Visions Steering Committee, "Strategic Vision for Professional Librarians," distributed 2 April 1993 on VISIONS, Internet discussion list of the Strategic Visions Discussion Group; Strategic Visions Discussion Group, "Values and Qualities of Librarianship," Discussion paper, distributed on 2 April 1993 on VISIONS, Internet discussion list of the Strategic Visions Discussion Group. The tedious wanderings of this Group and its statements provided a kind of impetus for this thesis.

(the mode and means for the production of value), its sex/gender system, its ideology, and its other relations of ruling. Their subjectivities and the social relations of their work are not outside the dialectic; their work cannot proceed outside of history. Social responsibility in librarianship thus requires critical/analytical and strategic cultural work in the radical-democratic projects of human emancipation contemporary with it.

This thesis is an attempt to enable through immanent critique an articulation of a feminist theory of the bibliographic apparatus as condition (of representability, etc.) and site of cultural-ideological work and other kinds of social production. Such a critical theory requires by its very terms that one build for a theoretical understanding of the concrete social whole though structural and genetic analyses. I have drawn upon socialist feminist literary and cultural criticism for such a theoretical understanding of the social relations within which librarians' work is enmeshed and overdetermined and which librarians enable and reproduce or transform in their social practice. Inasmuch as I have been successful in this, my thesis is a contribution to the realisation of social responsibility in librarianship.

As noted at the outset, such a contribution must be understood within the current resurgence of interest in social responsibility theory. The theory appears largely to have been a dead issue during most of the 1970s and 1980s. It is now significantly reinvigorated, a development which should perhaps be most closely associated with nearly three decades of resolute labour by E. J. Josey, the great African-American librarian. The admirable anthology recently edited by Donnarae MacCann, *Social Responsibilities in Librarianship*, must also be given due credit. This current reawakening depends upon that of social responsibility's heyday during the late 1960s. At that time, the ALA's commitment to it was confirmed through the final report of the Activities Committee on New Directions for ALA (better known as ACONDA),[2] and Ronald Benge wrote his germinal *Libraries and Cultural Change*

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[2] For a reliable interpretation of ACONDA's statements on social responsibility, see Katherine Laich's contribution to "Social Responsibility and the Library Bill of Rights," 31-32. Laich served as Chair of ACONDA during the crucial period from April 1970 to June 1971.

(both appeared in 1970).[3]

Benge's book stands in many ways at a crossroad in the theory of librarianship. He rejects the modern librarianship's ideal of custodianship of the book's physical body as the alienation of librarianship from books and social practice. He rightly views this as itself a historical construction with social commitments and implications for its time and, moreover, for its extension into the present (249-50).[4] Benge instead builds upon the more recent work of Margaret Egan and Jesse Shera, whose theory of bibliography included a focus on the "intellectual book," or embodied knowledge, and the discipline of social epistemology, which they conceived as the study of societies' changing patterns of cognition.[5] But Benge goes well beyond Egan and Shera in his recognition of the immanence of values to social practice, especially in the conception of the kind of knowledge which can be, should be, and is offered, as well as the ethico-political and cultural conceptions of potential and actual use. "If the librarian is indifferent to the nature of the use, he [*sic*] is not a man but a thing" (250). Thus, he concludes:

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[3] Ronald C. Benge, *Libraries and Cultural Change* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books & Clive Bingley, 1970). Page references are in the text. Benge's book is thoroughly rooted in its understanding of life in the United Kingdom. The only book that I know of which has attempted to do for North American librarianship what Benge has done for UK librarianship is A. Robert Rogers and Kathryn McChesney, *The Library in Society* (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1984). Unfortunately, this flawed book, while useful in the absence of any other, utterly fails to meet the challenge of 'social responsibility'.

[4] D. J. Foskett, *The Creed of the Librarian: No Politics, No Religion, No Morals*, Library Association Reference, Special and Information Section North Western Group Occasional Papers, no. 3 (London: Library Association, 1962), has, with its symptomatic metaphor of the chameleon (p. 11), become the representative statement of the case. The custodial conception not only raises the alienation of librarians from books and practice to the level of ahistorical ideal, but it at the same time insists upon the objectification of knowledge and the canonization of the division of expert labour. It therefore depends upon a rigid and utterly unsustainable distinction between librarian *qua* librarian and librarian as 'citizen' and individual. The former is merely a custodial device, a "key," as Foskett puts it (p. 10), in the existing information retrieval mechanism. The conservative commitment to the status quo in this position has already been discussed.

[5] See Jesse H. Shera, "Apologia pro Vita Nostra," *IPLO Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (July 1972): 7-19; Jesse H. Shera, *Libraries and the Organization of Knowledge*, ed. D. J. Foskett (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1965), 3-33; Jesse H. Shera, *Documentation and the Organization of Knowledge*, ed. D. J. Foskett (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966), 54-71, 174-77. Benge also explicitly draws upon other library theorists for justification and continuity, especially: the "severe" democracy of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science (the second in particular, which, in its fuller non-sexist form, states: 'Books are for all, or every reader his or her book'); a re-thinking of the pedagogical progressivism of the "secular missionaries" (or the "apostles of culture', as Garrison calls them); and theorists of the social communication apparatus.

"Certain themes [in my book] are constant, and one of them is the importance of background social and cultural studies for librarianship. I have implied that our professional attitudes inevitably rest on personal interpretations of the nature of modern culture" (254). In the interest of providing such self-understanding, Benge constructs a theoretical understanding of culture, society, technology, and so on, largely based on the thought of Marshall McLuhan and Raymond Williams.

My work follows Benge's general project and is enabled by it in crucial ways. However, although Benge pays attention to the culture and society as the *pre-condition* of the library and librarianship and not merely as a tableau upon which to project an explanation of its operations (the usual approach to 'library and society'), he nevertheless proceeds by abstraction rather than concretion. He begins with what Marx has called a "chaotic conception [*Vorstellung*] of the whole."[6] His starting point is "culture," which he takes to include such abstract entities and relations as communications, art, reading, book trade, science, education, librarianship, and so on. This procedure merely establishes the status quo and its surface phenomena as of the essence for librarians' nonresistant response. But the real relations of librarianship are immanent to librarianship itself. They can be revealed fully in their overdeterminations and transformed only through immanent critique and critical-oppositional practice.

Feminist librarians have begun this process, and they thus provide the conditions for the full development and realisation of social responsibility theory. Feminism provides feminist librarians with several crucial resources in this project: a rich, dynamic, conflictual, and critical theory of society and a cultural criticism; oppositional consciousness; and a tradition and conception of social practice and strategy, including alliances (within and outside the profession) and activism. Feminist librarians' practices serve as a kind of dialectical lever to bring librarianship to crisis. They serve as the basis for concrete theoretical productions, which potentially unveil the mystifications of modern librarianship. A feminist theory of the North American bibliographic apparatus, while in no way wishing to serve directly the interventionists and the promoters of unmediated 'application', is perhaps a first step toward transformation.

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[6] Marx, *Grundrisse*, 100.

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APPENDIX A

SOURCES FOR THE CRITIQUE OF CLASSIFICATION WORK BY FEMINIST LIBRARIANS

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APPENDIX B

PARTIAL INVENTORY OF SOURCES FOR DISCUSSIONS OF FEMINIST LIBRARIANSHIP

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Stineman, Esther. "Issues in Women's Studies Collection Development." *Collection Building* 1, no. 2 (1979): 57-76.

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West, Celeste. "The Secret Garden of Censorship: Ourselves." *Library Journal*, 1 September 1983, 1651-53.

APPENDIX C

PRINCIPLES FOR A FEMINIST THEORY OF CLASSIFICATION: PUSHING THE CONDITIONS OF REPRESENTABILITY

A. *Persistent (Auto)Critique* (critical-oppositional thesis): Academic feminism has grown at a phenomenal rate in terms of ideas, publications, language, conceptual relations, institutions, and so on. Yet it has an ambivalent, self-critical, and political relationship with its 'success', that is, its own historical process of definition, codification, commodification, canonization, and disciplinisation (e.g., Women's Studies) and institutionalisation in the academy, in society, and in its own discourse.

B. *Difference/Perspectivity* (sociality of knowledge production/use, micro-thesis): In fact, some academic feminists have resisted institutionalisation by asserting feminism's difference from itself. The subject 'academic feminism' subsumes many distinctly different needs, interest, goals, representations, histories, identities, locations, depths and levels of radicalisation, social and material relations, theoretical stances, strategies, and political stances. It also submerges real, consequential conflicts. Some of these differences may be seen in terms of the multiple struggles of which they form a part: struggle against racial oppression, class struggle (relation to the means of socio-economic production), struggle for sexual freedom, or struggle against neo-colonialism; they may also be viewed in terms of their relation to the narrow means of knowledge production (the academy and the disciplines), to the bibliographic apparatus, or to the information retrieval apparatus. These differences may (or may not) be striving together in the interest of an emergent "third wave" feminism. But they carry the potential of crucial, determinate, irreducible standpoints which demand with unprecedented force of anti-pluralist critique that these perspectives be truly represented, indeed central, in the academy and in the discourse of feminism. The irreducibility of the margin and violence of representation makes this impossible in the end. However, this realisation marks the beginning of an anti-pluralist classification theory and is a pre-condition for pushing the conditions of representability in an emancipatory direction.

C. *Anti-Canonicity* (sociality of knowledge production/use, intermediate thesis): Documents and subjects (including their meanings or "aboutness" or "relevance") are constituted by their systematic relationships to other documents and subjects which occur in the socially and historically situated acts of reading, use, citation, classification, and so on. Moreover, traditional disciplines (and classifications based therein) are constituted by and provide catachrestical mystified canonical relationships (e.g., supposedly 'natural' canonical literary histories, categories, names, conceptual relationships, methods of reading, certification, and legitimation) both within and without. These constitutive relations are written in terms of identities and (more-or-less violent) exclusions. They are conditions and effects of capitalistic and traditional social-scientific/academic notions of division of labour, objectification of knowledge, value and the separation of the cultural and the economic, and, among other things, explanations as sanctions for the socio-economic and gender hierarchy. Reproducing them and, on the other hand, challenging them are activities with unavoidable, irreducible ethico-political significance. The canonical relations are challenged and changed by new feminist-provided, open-ended, potentially emancipatory, radically inclusive, associative, but still oppositional relationships, knowledge, theories, practices, histories, and texts which, within the old canonical relations, can only be excluded through (mis)representational appropriation. This includes attempts to accommodate through pluralistic-appropriative strategies. Furthermore, reproducing the canonical relations cannot be rationalised with reference to their mere 'existence' or the 'impracticality' of change.

D. *Sociality of Texts* (sociality of knowledge production/use, macro-thesis): Gender, race, and class (among other determinations among the sociality, but these prominently) are consequential for the reading of texts; they are consequential for both reader and text. More basically, reader and text must be made visible or topical in the reading, comprehending, classifying, representing, retrieval process. Furthermore, neither texts nor readers are transparent or unitary. They are, in a significant sense, socially and historically located, interested, inter-textual, and not identical with themselves. At present, emancipatory reading may require resisting the text and taking control of the reading process.

E. *Transformation* (transformational thesis): Over their whole spectrum, academic feminisms demonstrate epistemic dynamism (sometimes with reference to "paradigm change," rarely incommensurability), epistemic relativity (sometimes with reference to anti-foundationalism or non-correspondentiality or non-identitarianism), and an awareness of the gendered social practices (relations and qualities in motion) productive of knowledge and power (sometimes with reference to social constructionism or contextualism). At the least, knowledge cannot be said to be unitary. Therefore, feminists are interested in transforming (in addition to innovating and integrating) the practices and knowledge. At the present time, this means exploring post-disciplinary possibilities for knowledge production, a refusal of the self-marginalising label of interdisciplinarity, and making knowledge in the traditional disciplines available for different (mis)users/uses ("use for difference"), interruption through critique, and productive crisis.

F. *Decolonization* (sociality of knowledge production/use, crisis/margin thesis): The problem of cultural representation of Third (and Fourth) World women and their texts pushes information retrieval specialists and their systems beyond the conceivable limits of representability. Nonetheless, feminism in decolonization demands that the problem be addressed at the same time as it complicates it. An easy multiculturalism or worse, an open perpetuation of a "new orientalism" in the interest of North American neo-colonialism as in current 'reform' of extant classification systems, is no solution. Working for a decolonization of classification in the interest of retrieving information about Third World women and decolonizing the metropolitan *Geist* would be a place at which to aim.

APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
GSLIS 450 (SPRING 1993) SYLLABUS

LIBRARIANSHIP AND INFORMATION SCIENCE: A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE
GSLIS 450 - SPRING 1993
Commerce West, Room 138

Betsy Kruger
246 Main Library
244-2071 (W)
359-9213 (H)
KRUGER@UIUCVMD

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

The course will be a discussion seminar. Each session for the first half of the course will focus on a broad area of concern, as outlined in the reading list below. The week before each session, I will distribute a short list of discussion questions for you to keep in mind while you do the reading. The questions may help focus our discussion; on the other hand, our discussion may take us elsewhere. We'll see. Sessions during the second half of the course will be developed by you and should focus on more specific topics/issues. Working in groups of two or three, you will select the topic for one of our sessions, develop a reading list, prepare discussion questions, and facilitate our discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Course grades will be determined as follows:

1/3	Class participation
1/3	Presentation
1/3	Final project

Class presentations:

A list of possible topics is attached, but I am completely open to your suggestions. You are responsible for forming your own groups. Topics are due at our third session on February 2. At the session preceding the one during which your group will present, please distribute a bibliography and short list of discussion questions to everyone in the class. You are responsible for having the readings available on reserve in the Library and Information Science Library no later than one week before your presentation.

Final project:

Your final project could take one of many different forms: a research paper, a critical annotated bibliography, an oral history project, an investigation of a specific problem...I am open to your proposals. Your project/paper pages. Please let me know your topic by March 16, 1993. Final projects are due at our last session on May 4.

READING LIST

NOTE: A course packet is available at Library Graphic Services, Room 44 Main Library. Two copies of each article are also available on reserve in the Library and Information Science Library. Articles marked with an asterisk (*) are not included in the course packet and are only available on reserve.

Session 1 - January 19, 1993

INTRODUCTION (no readings)

Session 2 - January 26, 1993

ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK: FEMINIST THEORY/FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS

Collins, Patricia Hill. "Learning from the outsider within: the sociological significance of Black feminist thought," in Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research. Edited by Mary Margaret Fonow and Judith A. Cook. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991, pp. 35-59.

Lowe, Marian and Margaret Lowe Benston. "The uneasy alliance of feminism and academia," in A Reader in Feminist Knowledge. Edited by Sneja Gunew. New York: Routledge, 1991, pp. 48-60.

Searing, Susan E. "Women's studies for a 'women's profession': theory and practice in Library Science," in The Knowledge Explosion: Generations of Feminist Scholarship. Edited by Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender. New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992. pp. 225-234.

Weibel, Kathleen. "Toward a feminist profession." Library Journal 101 (January 1976):263-267.

Westkott, Marcia. "Feminist criticism of the social sciences." Harvard Educational Review 1979, 49(4):422-430.

Session 3 - February 2, 1993

THE BIAS FROM WITHOUT: STATUS AND PROFESSIONALIZATION OF LIBRARIANSHIP AND THE "FEMINIZED PROFESSIONS"

Garrison, Dee. "The tender technicians: the feminization of public librarianship, 1876-1905." Journal of Social History 6 (Winter 1972/73):131-159)

Harris, Roma. "The struggle for control," in Librarianship: The Erosion of a Women's Profession by Roma Harris. Norwood: Ablex, 1992, pp. 23-39.

Harris, Roma A. and Christina Sue-Chan. "Cataloging and reference, circulation and shelving: public library users and university students perceptions of librarianship." LISR 10(1988):95-107

Hildenbrand, Suzanne. "Revision vs. reality: women in the history of the public library movement, 1876-1920," in The Status of Women in Librarianship. Edited by Kathleen Heim. New York: Neal Schuman, 1983, pp. 7-27.

Silver, Linda R. "Deference to authority in the feminized professions." School Library Journal January 1988, 34(5):21-27.

Session 4 - February 9, 1993

THE BIAS WITHIN: SEX STRUCTURING AND INEQUITY IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Coughlin, Caroline M. "Children's librarians: managing in the midst of myths." School Library Journal January 1978, pp. 15-18.

Hildenbrand, Suzanne. "The crisis in cataloging: a feminist hypothesis," in Recruiting, Educating, and Training Cataloging Librarians. Edited by Sheila Intner and Janet Swan Hill. Westport: Greenwood, 1989, pp.207-225.

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. "Women and the structure of organizations: explorations in theory and behavior," in Management Strategies for Librarians. Edited by Beverly Lynch. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1985, pp. 413-443.

Schiller, Anita R. "Women in librarianship," in Advances in Librarianship, volume 4. Edited by Melvin Voight. New York: Academic Press, 1974, pp. 103-147.

Van House, Nancy A. "Salary determination and occupational segregation among librarians." Library Quarterly 56(2):142-166.

Williams, Christine. "The glass elevator: hidden advantages for men in the 'female' professions." Social Problems, August 1992, 39(3):253-267.

Session 5 - February 16, 1993

LEADERSHIP AND WORKPLACE VALUES: FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES

Blackmore, Jill. "Educational leadership: a feminist critique and reconstruction," in Critical Perspectives in Educational Leadership. Edited by John Smyth. New York: Falmer Press, 1989, pp. 93-129.

Ferguson, Kathy A. "What does feminism have to do with bureaucracy?" in The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy by Kathy A. Ferguson. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984, pp. 3-29.

Goetsch, Lori. "Librarianship, professionalization and its impact on work environment." NWSA Perspectives Summer 1986, 4(3):7-8.

Moran, Barbara A. "Gender differences in leadership." Library Trends Winter 1992, 40(3):475-491

Pritchard, Sarah. "Impact of feminism on women in the profession." Library Journal August 1989, pp. 76-77.

Schuman, Patricia Glass. "Women, power and libraries," in Management Strategies for Libraries. Edited by Beverly P. Lynch. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1985, pp. 444-458.

Session 6 - February 23, 1993

FEMINIST LIBRARY SERVICES I: COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Guest: Beth Stafford-Vaughan, Women's Studies/WID Librarian, UIUC

Bowles, Gloria. "'Feminist scholarship' and 'women's studies': implications for university presses." Scholarly Publishing April 1988, 19(3):163-168.

Gough, Cal and Ellen Greenblatt, "Services to gay and lesbian patrons: examining the myths." Library Journal June 1992, pp. 59-63.

Hole, Carol. "Click! The feminization of the public library: policies and attitudes make men the great unserved." American Libraries December 1990, pp. 1076-1079.

Kravitz, Rhonda Rios, Adelia Lines, and Vivian Sykes. "Serving the emerging majority: documenting their voices." Library Administration and Management Fall 1991, 5(4):184-188.

Seajay, Carol. "Feminist publishing and bookselling in the U.S.A.," in Alternative Library Literature 1988/1989. Edited by Sanford Berman. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1990, pp. 30-31.

Searing, Susan E. "Fighting sexism in the stacks: the library response to women's studies." MPLA Newsletter 32 (December 1987) 3:1-7.

Searing, Susan E. and Joan Ariel. "Women's Studies," in Selection of Library Materials in Applied and Interdisciplinary Fields. Edited by Beth J. Shapiro and John Whaley. Chicago: American Library Association, 1987, pp. 250-269.

West, Celeste. "The secret garden of censorship: ourselves." Library Journal September 1, 1983, pp. 1651-1653.

Session 7 - March 2, 1993

FEMINIST LIBRARY SERVICES: ACCESS ISSUES

Guest: Pauline Cochrane, Visiting Professor, GSLIS

Berman, Sanford. "Compare and contrast, or, the unexamined cataloging record isn't worth inputting." Collection Building 9(1989):36-42.

Broidy, Ellen. "Bibliographic instruction in women's studies: from the grassroots to the ivory tower," in Conceptual Frameworks for Bibliographic Instruction. Edited by Mary Reichel and Mary Ann Ramey. Littleton: Libraries Unlimited, 1987, p. 86-96.

Detlefsen, Ellen. "Issues of access to information about women," in Women's Collections. Edited by Lee Ash. New York: Haworth, 1986. pp. 163-171.

Fisher, Edith Maureen. "Women of color: observations about library access." Ethnic Forum 6(1986):117-127.

Humphreys, Nancy. "Beyond standard forms of information organization: a woman's classification system for libraries." Feminist Collections 9(Fall 1987):9-14.

Marshall, Joan K. "Principles for establishing subject headings relating to people and peoples," in On Equal Terms: A Thesaurus for Nonsexist Indexing and Cataloging by Joan K. Marshall. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1977, pp. 6-16.

Session 8 - March 9, 1993

NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

Session 9 - March 16, 1993

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: GENDER AND CLASS ISSUES

Damarin, Suzanne E. "Where is women's knowledge in the age of information?" in The Knowledge Explosion: Generations of Feminist Scholarship. Edited by Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender. New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992, pp. 362-370.

Damarin, Suzanne E. "Women and information technology: framing some issues for education." Feminist Teacher, Winter 1992, 6(2):16-20.

Doornbos, Annette and Liza Wieman. "Women: info poor in the info age," in Alternative Library Literature 1984/1985. Edited by Sanford Berman. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1990, pp. 42-43.

Harris, Roma. "Information technology and the de-skilling of librarians." Computers in Libraries, January 1992, p. 8-16.

Jansen, Sue Curry. "Gender and the information society: a socially structured silence." Journal of Communication, Summer 1989, 39(3):196-215.

Murdock, Graham and Peter Golding. "Information poverty and political inequality: citizenship in the age of privatized communication." Journal of Communication, Summer 1989, 39(3):180-195.

Pritchard, Sarah M. "Trends in computer-based resources for Women's Studies." Feminist Teacher 3(3):8-13.

Session 10 - March 23, 1993

ISSUES IN LIBRARY EDUCATION AND RECRUITMENT

Freiband, Susan. "Multicultural issues and concerns in library education." Journal of Education for Librarianship and Information Science, Fall 1992, 33(4):287-294.

Harris, Roma, B. Gillian Mitchell, and Carol Cooley. "The gender gap in library education." Journal of Education for Librarianship and Information Science, Winter 1985, 25(3):167-176.

Maack, Mary Niles. "Women in library education: down the up staircase." Library Trends, Winter 1986, pp. 401-432.

Moriearty, Jill and Jane Robbins-Carter. "Role models in library education: effects on women's careers." Library Trends, Fall 1985, 34(2):323-341.

Randall, Ann Knight. "Minority recruitment in librarianship," in Libraries for the New Millennium. Edited by Kathleen Heim. Chicago: American Library Association, 1988, pp. 11-25.

Rich, Adrienne. "Toward a women centered university," in On Lies, Secrets and Silences: Selected Prose, 1966-1978 by Adrienne Rich. New York: Norton, 1979, pp. 125-155.2

STUDENT SEMINARS

Session 11 - March 30, 1993

TOPIC: The PC Debate on College Campuses

Session 12 - April 6, 1993

TOPIC: Feminist Research Methods

Session 13 - April 13, 1993

TOPIC: Feminism, Censorship and Pornography

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TOPIC: Sexual Harrassment

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TABLES OF CONTENTS FOR *FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP* AND *A READER IN FEMINIST KNOWLEDGE*

DuBois, Ellen Carol, Gail Paradise Kelly, Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, Carolyn W. Korsmeyer, and Lillian S. Robinson. *Feminist Scholarship: Kindling in the Groves of Academe*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

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Chapter 5. Ten Years of Feminist Scholarship: The Response of the Disciplines

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Gunew, Sneja, ed. *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*. London: Routledge, 1991.

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